

“MISTER PRESIDENT, WHERE ARE YOUR CITIZENS?”

STATECRAFT AND CITIZEN-STATE RELATIONS IN POST-
CONFLICT BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

Wetenschappelijke verhandeling
Aantal woorden: 24.374

Leander Papagianneas

Stamnummer: 01206797

Promotor: Prof. dr. Marlene Schäfers

Copromotor: Prof. dr. Rozita Dimova

Masterproef voorgelegd voor het behalen van de graad master in de richting Conflict en Development

Academiejaar: 2016– 2017

Abstract

Increasing globalization and the end of the Cold War had significant implications for the nature and role of nation-states. Transnational processes would alternate relations between territorial sovereignty, identity and political power (Sharma & Gupta 2006). Yet, exactly at a time conceived of as the *end of the nation-state* (Ohmae 1995), a handful of nation-states were born out of bloody civil war at the borders of Europe. A testing ground for external state-building projects, the Balkan region was left with a legacy of international intervention and a flawed democratization process.

Emphasizing the contradictory nature of citizen-state relations generated by the post-conflict context, this thesis takes Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) as a case-study. The thesis will, in the first two chapters, critically engage with literature of political science and anthropology. Here, it will focus on the political configuration of BiH and, more specifically, emphasize questions of statecraft, citizenship and identification in relation to everyday experiences. In the third chapter, the thesis will provide a detailed analysis of two protest campaigns that occurred in BiH in June 2013 and February 2014. With the framework of Althusser, these events would allow me to investigate analytical issues of subjectivity and political agency. By elaborating on the work of a local NGO and community projects this part will analyze the role of civic action in redefining agency and citizenship. Central to the thesis stands the argument that pervasive wartime identities and ethno-politics have been a continuous preclusion for alternative politics. Abovementioned events and projects cultivate a sense of responsible citizenship capable of coming to terms with formalized ethno-nationalist division.

Abstract

Het einde van de Koude Oorlog en toenemende globalisering hebben een kenmerkende invloed op de aard en rol van natie-staten gehad. Transnationale processen hebben de relaties tussen territoriale soevereiniteit, identiteit en politieke macht aanzienlijk veranderd. Echter, net in een periode die geconcipieerd werd als het *einde der natie-staten*, werden aan de grenzen van Europa een handvol nieuwe natie-staten uit bloedig conflict geboren. De Balkan werd een testgrond voor externe projecten van naoorlogse staatsvorming. Bijgevolg werd de regio opgezaaid met een erfenis van internationale interventies en een gefnuikt democratiseringsproces. Deze thesis kijkt naar Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) als een specifiek geval waarin tegenstrijdige relaties tussen burgers en staat worden benadrukt als een gevolg van de post-conflict situatie. In de eerste twee hoofdstukken zal de thesis literatuur behandelen van de politieke wetenschappen en de antropologie. Hier worden, onder andere, de politieke configuratie van BiH besproken en kwesties van staatsbeleid, burgerschap en identificatie onderzocht in verhouding tot dagelijkse ervaringen. In het derde hoofdstuk analyseert de thesis twee protestcampagnes die hebben plaatsgevonden in juni 2013 en februari 2014. Binnen het theoretisch kader van Althusser zouden deze gebeurtenissen mij toelaten om dilemma's van *political agency* te bestuderen. Alsook onderzoekt dit hoofdstuk het werk van een lokale NGO en enkele gemeenschapsprojecten, om na te gaan in welke mate die *agency* en burgerschap kunnen beïnvloeden. Centraal in deze thesis staat het argument dat alomtegenwoordig nationalisme en ethno-politiek de mogelijkheid voor alternatieven uitsluit. De beschreven gebeurtenissen en projecten cultiveren een vorm van verantwoordelijk burgerschap dat in staat is om met de geformaliseerde ethno-nationalistische fragmentatie om te gaan.

Acknowledgments

I would first like to thank Aldijana Okerić who generously opened her live for me in the past years and did never mind to share her critical and engaging mind with me. Her continuous passion and enthusiasm in our discussions about Bosnia-Herzegovina and Sarajevo have kept my interest and love for this part of the world very much alive. Her relentless criticism of the international community and the corrupt BiH government have urged me to investigate the severity of the situation in much more detail than I could have thought of the first time I set foot in Sarajevo. As I have now found the direction of my academic and analytical interests, she will most likely be my first anthropological entry point to any further research on the Dayton state that might be conducted in the near future.

I was very lucky to enjoy the supervision of two of the most amazing academics that I know at the University of Ghent, whose guidance have inspired my current interest in 'the anthropology of the state'. I owe the most sincere gratitude to Dr. Marlene Schäfers from the department of Conflict and Development, who closely followed up on this work throughout the process. Her insightful comments and suggestions have proved to be a great source of learning, inspiration and direction. I owe special thanks, as well, to Prof. Dr. Rozita Dimova from the department of Eastern Languages and Cultures for her faith in my analytical skills and long-term support for my research on Bosnia-Herzegovina. Already as of 2015 her passionate tutoring and love for anthropology and psychoanalysis inspired me to approach the Balkans from a continuously engaging intellectual framework.

This work developed through moments of stress and hardship. I owe the most special gratitude to my parents who have put up with my behavior during the summer, a period which I normally not spend at home. In the past four weeks that I have been writing this thesis, they have showed continuous support and faith in me.

Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	<i>i</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>iii</i>
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s	7
The Politics of Ethno-Nationalism	7
In Opposition to ‘Ethnic Hatred’	9
International Intervention and the Dayton Peace Agreement	10
Dayton BiH: An External State-Building Project	12
Chapter Two: Alienated Citizen-State Relations	14
Changing Notions of Ethno-Nationalist Identities by Wartime Experiences	15
<i>Coherence by Ideology</i>	15
<i>Interpellation by Everyday Wartime Experiences</i>	16
<i>Ethnicized and Victimized Collective Bodies</i>	19
Lived Experiences of Ethno-Nationalism	20
<i>Simultaneous Attachment and Detachment</i>	21
<i>Agency in the Face of Interpellation</i>	22
<i>Moments of Contradiction: Anti-Citizens in Display</i>	24
Ethno-Nationalism and Existential Predicaments	26
<i>Shared Predicaments and Desires</i>	27
<i>Political Conditions: An Elusive State-Effect and Spatio-Temporal Entrapment</i>	28
<i>Low-Level Engagement and Mechanisms of Reproduction</i>	30
Chapter Three: Engaging the State	33
Re-Opened Space for Political Agency	34
<i>Assuming Agency in the Face of Neglect: The Baby-Revolution</i>	34
<i>Asserting Agency outside Hegemony: The February Revolts</i>	37
Political and Civic Action	43
<i>Asserting Agency within Hegemony: YIHR and the Sarajevo Youth Summit</i>	43
<i>Using Hegemony to Assert Agency: Dobre Kote and community projects</i>	47
Conclusion	51
<i>Bibliography</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>Appendix</i>	<i>62</i>

Introduction

In the early days of my six-month stay in Sarajevo, three years ago by now, contact with people of the university and the Erasmus program was limited to basic public relations talk. My contemporaries were eager to inform me about the cosmopolitan legacy of their city, its Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian influences, its role in the resistance against the Nazis and the golden era of Tito's Yugoslavia, culminating in the Winter Olympic Games of 1984, which gave Sarajevo its former international prestige. I quickly noticed how for many of my peers history stopped at that point. I would ask them "what about Sarajevo now?" In response, my acquaintances would shrug and say: "war happened, Sarajevo is only interesting for tourists", ending the conversation in complete apathy. The radical break in their discourse between pre-war and post-war Sarajevo is what intrigued me to further investigate what was going on in this city. In my early naivety, I mainly focused on the war as such and tapped into mainstream sources such as the Historical Museum of Sarajevo. Gradually, I came to understand that the Bosnian War of 1992-1995 and the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), which ended the war, were just the tip of the iceberg. These events did not really help me to fully understand Sarajevo's contemporary state of mind. As I grew increasingly demotivated by people's apathy and tendency to talk about national politics in over-generalized terms, I realized I would need to talk to some kind of 'local agent' (Richmond & MacGinty 2013). This is where Aldijana Okerić came into the picture.

Aldijana Okerić is a 25-year old law-student and human rights activist who has been working for the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR). She has been my main reference point in understanding the continuous "Catch 22" of day-to-day Bosnian politics. In our conversations, Aldijana would explain me how the DPA has institutionalized the nationalist politics that provoked the war. "The DPA handcuffed our society," she would say, referring to the political deadlock of the past twenty years. As we would discuss the current state of affairs in BiH, Aldijana would never miss a chance to blame politics and the war, which is pretty common for any Sarajevan. What made Aldijana different, however, was the passionate motivation discernible in her voice when she was telling me about some important legislation passed in parliament; the work she was doing for YIHR throughout BiH; the protests that were going on earlier in 2014; or about the local community projects she was running in Sarajevo's neighborhoods. These topics

would leave a lasting impression on me of Aldijana as an exceptionally engaged and politically aware citizen of BiH. Yet, occasionally, her pessimism would take over. Then, she would say: “Sometimes it feels like I’m the only one who cares about what’s going on here in this country.”

In our discussions, Aldijana would frequently address the widespread cynicism and apathy of citizens towards the state. Aldijana’s concerns entailed a feeling of abandonment: she felt abandoned not only by the state itself but also by her fellow citizens. How can we come to understand these feelings of alienation from the state? What mechanisms generate a citizenry that does not feel any attachment to the body-politic that governs its lives? The state, here, is used in a Gramscian sense: as a form of social relations and practices that are produced and reproduced (Gramsci 1992: 229, see also Buttigieg 1995). According to Gramsci, these social relations are crucial in generating consent to a particular regime of domination, the hegemonic project of the ruling class. Emphasizing the role of culture, Gramsci allows us to perceive the state as a site of struggle in which both civil and political society claim access to state provision. The state, then, is not a fixed, coherent entity but a multilayered and contradictory ensemble of institutions, practices and people (Sharma & Gupta 2006). In that respect, states are produced through culture and discourse, and have a context-specific meaning for their populations (Navaro-Yashin 2002). Citizens, in turn, are the bureaucratically recognized population of the state. Citizens are that part of the population that is vertically encompassed by the state and has access to state allocation and state provision (Anter 2014). How citizens perceive and imagine the state depends on how the state manifests itself in their everyday lives (Sharma & Gupta 2006). In their everyday encounters with the state, citizens assign a specific meaning to its institutions, its representations and its practices. These encounters are in part determined by the ruling ideology of the state. Ideology aims at the reproduction of the domination of the ruling class by providing a coherent hegemonic framework which defines the relationship between citizens and the state (Althusser 1971).

Nonetheless, citizen-state relationships are inherently contradictory, yet not dichotomous. Using Althusser’s and Gramsci’s framework, which will be elaborated below, the thesis takes BiH as a case-study in order to disentangle some of these contradictions. How do people in BiH perceive and experience the state? How do they engage with it? How are they perceived by the state? How does the BiH state reproduce the domination of its ruling classes? How does the BiH state subject the population to its ruling ideology? How do people relate to this ideology? How do people negotiate the state’s ideology with their everyday experiences of the state? How can people

in BiH assume/acquire and assert/practice political agency? How do they claim access to state provision? How is the space for civic and political action articulated? What are the limitations and challenges of civic and political action in BiH? How do protests and community projects negotiate the tensions between citizen-state relationships and issues of political agency?

The case of Bosnia-Herzegovina is a relevant, yet not *unique* example in order to attempt answering above formulated questions. Reasons are multi-folded. Firstly, the DPA was one the first internationally brokered peace agreements in the post-Cold War era influenced by the liberal peace agenda, which focuses on the implementation of liberal democracy (Duffield 2001). The case of BiH showed a dramatic shift in strategies of international state-building from big schemes of social, political and military reforms to the empowerment of local actors (Belloni 2001; Lederach 1997; Richmond 2009). Secondly, the post-conflict context in BiH makes the contradictory nature of citizen-state relationships explicit (Pickering 2007). For example, formalized ethno-politics in BiH make it practically impossible for anyone formally identifying with BiH as a nation – standing above the three ethnic communities (Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs) - to get access to state provision. This means that the BiH state, in the absence of a supra-ethnic national category, does not recognize its ‘non-ethnic’ citizens¹, as they are excluded from the ideology of ethnic citizenship (Sarajlić 2010, 2012).² Consequently, ethnic identification becomes obligatory for the pursuit of life projects. Thirdly, recent protests and community projects indicate a growing sense of civic responsibility by which people, regardless of their ethno-nationalist identity, claim access to state provision.³ In addition, they show us the available space for civic and political action and reveal inherent dilemmas of asserting political agency. Finally, since the external post-conflict state-building experiment of the 1990s has failed dramatically (Chandler 1999, 2006a), BiH today could again be a testing ground for new strategies of cultivating civic responsibility. Not to say that this thesis aspires to provide these strategies but BiH does reveal potential sites of civic action that could help to re-establish a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the decision-making process and the state apparatus.

¹It is unclear how many of these citizens exist, as any census is systematically blocked by nationalist parties.

²This situation is not unique to BiH, as ethnic citizenship regimes can be identified around the world (see e.g. Dibua 2011; Maatsch 2011; Sanina 2012).

³ One could also analyze the social movements behind these events through the framework of contentious politics (see e.g. Tilly 2005; Tilly & Tarrow 2015), or by Social Movement Theory (see e.g. Wiktorowicz 2004). However, this thesis focuses on how these events lay bare the contradictory nature of citizen-state relationships and how people assert their political agency, and not so much on the rise and fall of a movement *an sich*.

Unfortunately, due to the limited time-span and scope of this thesis, extensive fieldwork on civic responsibility in BiH is impossible, which would be beneficial in generating primary data. In the first chapter, which deals with the dissolution of Yugoslavia, I will draw upon literature of international relations and political science. In the second chapter, when examining citizen-state relationships, I will deal with published ethnographic research. And, in the third chapter, which investigates civic action in BiH, I will use media and news coverage, and grey literature. Here, I am also drawing upon personal experiences from my time as an Erasmus student in 2014 when I was based in Sarajevo; and upon my personal correspondence with Aldijana. As a result, this thesis aims at providing a contribution for further ethnographic research that focuses on statecraft, citizen-state relationships and civic action in BiH. In addition, this thesis modestly positions itself as responsible scholarship engaged with the challenges of studying Dayton BiH.

In the first chapter, the thesis will start with a brief overview of the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the Bosnian Civil War of 1992-1995, after which it will turn to the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) and the involvement of the international community in post-conflict BiH. The historical events have all been dealt with in much more detail elsewhere than this thesis aspires (Burg & Shoup 1999; Detrez 1996; Hayden 1996; Little & Silbert 1995; Pond 2006). Problematically enough, this literature often takes ethnic identities at face value and positions them as the primary cause of the war. However, with the help of a selected bibliography (Campbell 1998; Chandler 1999, 2006; Gagnon 2004; Sarajlić & Marko 2011), I will highlight relevant points for the argument that ethnic violence was a top-down political project of national deconstruction initiated by an elite keen on staying in power. Additionally, I intend to show that ethno-nationalism pervades BiH politics up until today and constitutes the main obstacle for progress in BiH. For example, Gagnon's (2004) *The Myth of Ethnic War: Serbia and Croatia in the 1990s* argues that nationalist rhetoric during the endgame of Yugoslavia was used as an electoral tool without having a real basis on the ground. Nationalism aimed to demobilize people, alternative and progressive politics, and fundamental challenges to the ruling parties. In addition, drawing on David Chandler's (1999) *Bosnia: Faking Democracy After Dayton*, I will show that the DPA is a primary example of 'power sharing regimes' (O'Flynn & Russell 2005) gone wrong: by providing veto rights for the three main ethnic groups, the federal government's legitimacy has been continuously contested. As is commonly accepted, the DPA has been responsible for the political stalemate of the past twenty years, doing virtually nothing to develop democracy. The

main point of this chapter is that citizens' alienation from the state stems from an unstable political environment, which drives them towards nationalist elites for provision and security.

In the second chapter, the thesis will turn to ethnographic literature on BiH society, conveying lived experiences of ethno-politics. Set within the theoretical framework of Althusser (1971) and Gramsci (1992), this chapter emphasizes aspects of identity and belonging. Drawing on Ivana Maček's (2009) *Sarajevo Under Siege. Anthropology in Wartime*, Azra Hromadžić's (2015) *Citizens of an Empty Nation: Youth and State-Making in Postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina*, and Stef Jansen's (2015) *Yearnings in the Meantime: 'Normal Lives' and the State in a Sarajevo Apartment Complex*, this chapter aims at answering questions in relation to citizen-state relationships, emphasizing the discrepancy between lived realities and legal categories.⁴ How are people's identities constituted? What determines their understanding of identification? How are citizens perceived by the state? How do citizens experience the state? How do they express their sense of belonging? How do they imagine the state in their evocation of 'normal lives'? What do they expect from the state? Starting with Maček's work on Sarajevan wartime experiences, the first section investigates how individuals gradually lost their sense of belonging, renegotiating their loyalties with a certain group. From a bottom-up perspective, Maček documents the deconstruction of the Sarajevan identity by imposed narratives of ethno-religious antagonism, invented by wartime nationalist elites. Central to her book stands the premise that people embody often contradictory views towards the state, their fellow citizens, their actions and responsibilities.

In a similar effort, Hromadžić highlights the often contradictory relationship between citizens and the nation-state. By focusing on unresolved tensions between imposed reconciliation projects and daily practices of segregation in the Mostar Gymnasium, she conveys youth's experimentation with identity. Hromadžić argues that the everyday paradoxes of citizenship experienced in the lives of youth leaves them detached from BiH, which becomes an 'empty nation'. The chapter's third section focuses on Jansen's work. Set in an apartment complex in Dobrinja, at the outskirts of Sarajevo, Jansen investigates people's yearnings for 'normal lives'. His work focuses on unresolved tensions between the present political stalemate, experienced as a

⁴ The discrepancy is constituted by the fact that people in BiH are only recognized as ethnic collective bodies, not as individual political subjects. This leaves Roma's, Jews and federal citizens (the so-called Other category); cross-ethnic interaction and relationships, and 'mixed' individuals invisible to the state. Evidently, this is not unique to BiH and similar discrepancies can be found in many post-conflict contexts such as Kosovo, East-Timor, Sri Lanka, India, and so on (see also Lederach 1997; Richmond 2009, 2012).

limbo, and the impossibilities for a post-Dayton⁵ future. With the analogy of waiting for a bus, Jansen deals with temporal and spatial aspects of statecraft and citizenship. Central to this chapter stands the argument that the ethno-nationalist ideology constituting the Dayton BiH hegemonic project fails to generate citizens' consent. Simultaneously, however, ethno-nationalism persists in sustaining the political conditions which allow for the reproduction of the status quo.

In the third chapter, this thesis will analyze events of civic action such as the "JMBG protests" (see below) of June 2013, the February Revolts of 2014, the work of a local NGO, and several community projects. Drawing on news and media coverage, personal correspondence, and Damir Arsenijević's (2014) *Unbriable Bosnia: The Fight for the Commons*, I will investigate the discourse and practices of these events. As such, I intend to examine how contradictory citizen-state relationships generate specific dilemmas of political agency. How do people participating in these events relate to the state? How do these events relate to notions of non-ethnic citizenship? How do these events relate to wartime ethno-nationalist identities? How do these events articulate the space for civic action? How do participants assert political agency? Could these events form a pretext to develop an overarching, non-ethnic citizenship? How could these events facilitate a process that initiates new forms of socio-political organization, keeping the state intact yet problematizing the effects of formalized ethno-politics? In short, can these events help to come to terms with the alienated and disengaged nature of citizen-state relationships? In opposition to ethno-nationalist ideology, I want to emphasize that these events allow the cultivation of a sense of ownership and civic responsibility that renegotiates citizen-state relationships and dilemmas of agency. Through participation, people are learning how to engage the state not as ethnicized and victimized collective bodies but as individual non-ethnic political subjects. Not to say people in BiH have no agency whatsoever. Instead, the thesis focuses on how these events initiate a *transformation* in the political subjectivity of BiH citizens and in the ways citizens assert political agency, away from alienation and *low-level engagement* towards a sense of ownership and responsibility. Ideally, civic responsibility could become a basis for cross-ethnic mobilization.

⁵ The term post-Dayton BiH has been used in literature (see e.g. Chandler 1999; Hromadžić 2015; Sarajlić 2012) denoting the period after the Dayton Peace Agreement. Here, however, post-Dayton BiH refers to a hypothetical future in which the constitution, as it is formalized by the DPA, is abolished and rewritten.

Chapter one: Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s

The Politics of Ethno-Nationalism

Before discussing lived experiences in the second chapter, it is necessary to get a general insight in how citizen-state relationships in BiH have come about. After forty-four years of socialist rule, 1989 proved a significant break with the past.⁶ Identity politics and ethno-nationalist discourse heavily disturbed peoples' general socialist, heterogeneous conception of society and the state. A common expression in Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) is that “the Berlin wall fell on our heads”, denoting the grave consequences of the end of the Cold War for Yugoslavia.

In 1990, nationalist parties won the elections in most of the Yugoslav republics. Both Slovenia and Croatia declared independence the following year. Already before, hostilities had erupted between the local Croatian police and Serbian irregulars seeking to join Serbia. Serbian president at the time Slobodan Milošević increasingly pushed for the inclusion of all Serbian minorities on Croatian and Bosnian territory into “Greater Serbia”. Bosnia-Herzegovina - the Yugoslav republic with the highest ethnic heterogeneity – had a long-standing history of ethnic tolerance and coexistence.⁷ This tradition made many, including the national media, initially believe that the fighting between Serbia and Croatia would not spill over. Yet, atrocities between Serbs and Croats invoked an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. In addition, since the three main nationalist parties of BiH were already replacing old communist loyalists throughout the former socialist republic in 1990 and 1991, ethnic discourse and polarization were increasingly resonating in media and politics. People who resisted nationalist discourse were intimidated, marginalized or eliminated. All three ethnic communities – Serbs, Croats and Muslims – were deeply suspicious towards each other with regard to the other's power position, precluding any alternative for identity politics. In other words, Bosnia's society was gradually broken down along ethnic lines by new nationalist elites seeking to strengthen their power-base.

At this point the question rises how it was possible for a multi-ethnic socialist federation to succumb so easily into ethnic conflict. After WWII, wartime atrocities between Serbs, Muslims

⁶To get a general insight in the construction of socialist Yugoslavia under Joseph Broz Tito, see Drapac (2010).

⁷An historical account of the Croatian WWII-occupation of Sarajevo shows how Serbs and Muslims would help each other evading deportation (Balić 2009).

and Croats had never been properly addressed by Joseph Broz Tito (Balić 2009; Van Gorp 2012), leaving many social tensions unresolved. In Tito's conceptualization of the new Yugoslav Federation, all signs of nationalism had to be censored. Yugoslav ideology and intimate cross-ethnic contacts discouraged ethnic identification. After Tito's death in 1980, however, nationalist sentiments were intentionally brought to the foreground of the political arena (Pešić & Janić 1992). Since atrocities had been left unaddressed, social tensions could easily be appropriated into an ethno-nationalist framework that used history for the political project of new elites (Van Winkle 2005). Campbell (1998: 86), for example, asserts that issues of nationalism and ethnicity were "questions of history violently deployed in the present for contemporary political goals." A substantial body of anthropological literature deals with ethnicity as a political project (see e.g. Das 1990, 1995; Hayden 1996; Herzfeld 1997; Nordstrom 1997). These authors perceive ethnicity primarily as a product of state policies, aimed at fitting existing group labels into new frameworks of identity, entitlement and sovereignty. Nationalism, then, became a way to legitimize the 'deconstruction' (Campbell 1998: 20) of the socialist federation into individual nation-states; and to legitimize economic reforms.

As many other 'developmental states' (Woo-Cumings 1999), Yugoslavia had built up an enormous debt in the 1980s and stood under great pressure from the IMF to reform its economy. In a period of great rupture and increasing globalization, the changing world left people in fundamental uncertainty (Oushakine 2009). The rapidly changing nature of the Yugoslav state created an atmosphere of enormous anxiety and insecurity: citizens did not know what to expect from the newly defined body-politic (Appadurai 1998). By 1992, the entire state apparatus was in control of nationalist parties. In terms of entitlement and access to state provision, nationalist parties, then, became the only viable option for security. Since access to the state is directly connected to questions of belonging, ethnic violence became a way for people to understand who would be excluded from state provision. Campbell (1998: 99) confirms this as he explains the link between violence, identity and the political arena. According to him, ethnic violence was necessary in order to establish distinct political communities. In constituting new political identities, ethnic violence had the purpose to make the boundaries between Serbs, Muslims and Croats concrete; distinctions that in Yugoslav times were unimportant (see also Appadurai 1998). In that sense, ethnic cleansing was a way to create homogeneous political communities in which nationalist parties could assert their political and economic control.

In Opposition to ‘Ethnic Hatred’

The Bosnian civil war from 1992 to 1995 has been elaborately dealt with elsewhere (Burg & Shoup 1999; Detrez 1996; Hayden 1996; Little & Silbert 1995; Pond 2006). Problematic about these works is their taken-for-granted attitude towards ethnic categories. As such, this literature subscribes to the narrative of ‘ancient ethnic hatreds’, reflecting an Orientalist approach (Said 1979). More importantly, this approach neglects the issue of international responsibility. Western media and the international community at the time were struggling to account for the violent outburst at the borders of Europe in a period of triumphant liberal values. Images of tribalism and ethnic hatred pervaded the Balkans, again, became the antithesis of the modern West (Todorova 1996). In other words, Western perception helped to sustain the myth of ‘ancient ethnic hatreds’ and ‘primitive backwardness’ (see e.g. Bakić-Hayden 1995; Todorova 1996; Greenberg 2004; Hayden 2007; Žohar 2012). By consequence, nationalist imaginaries informed the international response to the war. Campbell (1998: 155-163), for example, describes how ethnicity became the main way of reasoning about the war. According to him, any non-ethnic or non-nationalist solution was rejected by the international community.

However, ‘ethnic hatred’ never fully accounted for the question of what caused the violence in the Balkans. Useful for a better understanding is Gagnon’s (2004) work *Serbia and Croatia in the 1990s: The Myth of Ethnic War*, in which he contests the general perception of ‘ancient ethnic hatreds’ by using a social constructivist approach towards notions of identity and belonging. The constructivist approach perceives identity not as a coherent, unitary concept but pays special attention to the role of social relationships and lived experiences in its construction. In that sense, this framework problematizes fixed categories such as ‘ethnicity’ and ‘ethnic group’. This allows investigating war and violence not in direct function of ethnic identification but as part of more complex and highly political processes. Gagnon contests the argument that ‘ethnic hatred’ caused the war by pointing out that ethnic polarization was rather a top-down imposed process than a bottom-up reality. Cross-ethnic solidarity was crucial to the peaceful coexistence within ethnically heterogeneous Yugoslavia, and was actively promoted by its slogan *Bratstvo I Jedinstvo* [Brotherhood and Unity]. However, at the end of the 1980s, in a time of increasing globalization and economic liberalization, the communist nomenclature crystallized and politicized ethnic differences in order to demobilize reformists within the government who wanted to liberalize the

economy. In that sense, polarization did not arise from actually existing hatred, yet was nurtured by political elites that wanted to keep control over their privileged access to state resources.

There are several indications that support the discrepancy between top-down polarization and lived realities of cross-ethnic solidarity, which Gagnon highlights at the beginning of his book. Soon after hostilities between Croats and Serbs escalated in the summer and fall of 1991, the Serbian government called up reservists to defend their people in Croat territory. However, 50 to 90 percent of Serbs evaded draft or fled the country. Additionally, both Milošević and his competitor for the presidency, Milan Panić, criticized ethnic violence, respectively calling for ethnic tolerance and an end to the war. Another point is that solidarity was mainly based on the urban-rural divide, not on ethnicity (Gagnon 2004: 3-4). As many ‘ethnically correct’ refugees (meaning that Croats would go to Croatia, Serbs to Serbia, and Muslims to Bosnia) from rural areas flooded their respective capitals Zagreb, Belgrade and Sarajevo, many urban residents complained about their presence. Instead of showing bonds of emotional attachment, people from the capital expressed resentment towards the rural refugees, stemming from a feeling of cultural superiority rooted in an urban identity. Furthermore, violence was not only committed along cross-ethnic fault lines, but also along intra-ethnic fault lines (see also Kalyvas 2006). The violent campaign of nationalist parties did not stop at ethnic cleansing but also terrorized those Serbs and Croats who criticized their regime and called for a more moderate policy. Consequently, explanations that focus on the primitive backwardness of the Balkans show two weaknesses. Not only do they dismiss the on-the-ground context but also “completely miss the point that [the wars of the 1990s] were the creation of modern, urban elites; that they occurred in a relatively open and cosmopolitan society; and that they were a direct response to (...) economic and political trends of liberalization in the country” (Gagnon 2004: 6).

International Intervention and the Dayton Peace Agreement

According to Burg & Shoup (1999: 314), the initial division over strategy between Western powers and the reluctance of the U.S. to help in the early 1990s precluded any coherent response to the Bosnian War. Campbell (1998: 115) confirms this, as he notes how the U.S. proposed the partition of BiH only by the end of 1993. By 1995, after a long series of negotiations, broken

treaties and cease-fires, the ‘logic of partition’ was left aside in favor of keeping BiH together (for a detailed account, see Campbell 1998: 115-164). According to Campbell, solutions for BiH were based on ‘primordial’ conceptualizations of the local political community, which privileged nationalist imaginaries of a fixed connection between territory and identity. In other words, the international community believed ethno-nationalist rhetoric and was convinced Serbs, Muslims and Croats could not live together but only in ethnically homogeneous territories. In that sense, Campbell argues, the international community had a strong responsibility in directing the solution in favor of the nationalists. In the face of an increasingly complex intra-state conflict, its particular problematization of BiH had made identity politics indispensable (Campbell 1998: 125).

A crucial element of the international community’s intervention was the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA), which formally ended the Bosnian War in 1995, re-established and formalized new relations between the state and its newly defined citizens. In its essence, the DPA institutionalized ethnic division in a so-called “unitary and multi-ethnic state, [creating] a form of apartheid in southern Europe not long after it disappeared from southern Africa” (*ibid.*: 155). As a form of ‘consociational democracy’ (Bogaarts 2006), 49 percent of BiH territory is assigned to the Serb entity, called *Republika Srpska* (RS). 51 percent of the territory is constituted as the Muslim-Croat entity, the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina (FBiH). The relations between the entities and the common BiH state are inherently contradictory, which undermine its sovereignty and territorial integrity. For example, the two distinct entities are responsible for issuing their own passports; controlling citizenship; establishing economical and political relationships with neighboring states, and so on. More importantly, the legitimate use of force is assigned to the entities, leaving the common state no possibility to defend its territorial sovereignty.⁸ Also, decision-making processes within the federal institutions are ethnicized. All 15 delegates for the Parliamentary Assembly need to be equally composed of Muslims, Croats and Serbs. In addition, ethnic discrimination is institutionalized: people not belonging to one of the three constituent people, such as Roma and Jews, are politically excluded. Moreover, each ethnic group has a veto right to oppose any parliamentary decisions potentially dangerous for their ‘vital interests’. The Constitutional Court is obsolete in appealing these vetoes because it is not allowed to rule on questions of ethno-nationalist survival. In short, the Dayton constitution left BiH as an extremely dysfunctional and decentralized state, creating a political deadlock that has not yet been resolved.

⁸By now the army has been reformed into a federal state body, yet within the forces ethnic division remains.

Dayton BiH: An External State-Building Project

The externally imposed Dayton constitution caused a significant democratic deficit. This is a direct consequence of the fact that the international community had no concrete approach in dealing with the war in BiH (Sarajlić & Marko 2011). As their ad hoc crisis management was running after the facts, neither the U.S. nor Europe had any idea of how a post-conflict BiH would look like. In that sense, BiH became one of the first experiments of external state-building in the post-Cold War era. After the initial post-conflict stabilization of BiH, the international community set up an executive, legislative and judicial apparatus, according to principles of power sharing regimes (see also Bieber & Sokolović 2001). The expectation was that these top-down institutions would establish the rule of law, after which democratic elections could be held. According to Chandler (1999: 194), the democratization process resulted in heightened political division and ethnic segmentation, further empowering nationalist leaders and their discourse. Additionally, policy-making capacity has effectively been removed from the state and the entities by the implementation of specific democratization strategies and international supervision. In other words, political agency has shifted from ‘the people’ to external regulatory bodies; making political accountability and self-government less likely (see also Chandler 2006a, 2006b).

As such, BiH was turned into a semi-international protectorate instead of a sovereign democracy. According to Chandler, the capacity of Bosnian institutions to play a coherent role in policy-making has been undermined by “the extension of international institutional mechanisms of regulation” (1999: 64). For example, the Office of the High Representative (OHR), the European Union (EU), and the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OCSE), have taken over executive and legislative power in BiH institutions and actively participate in the political system up until today. Especially the role of the OHR is problematic, which was assigned the so-called Bonn powers in 1997. These allow it to remove from office any public official who violates legal commitments of the DPA or to impose laws aimed at furthering the political development of BiH when BiH institutions fail to do so. Consequently, the continuous international involvement in BiH politics undermines the political legitimacy of the common state, which is exploited by nationalist elites and problematizes citizen-state relationships.

In the absence of political accountability and local ownership, mistrust and political insecurity have increased. Chandler argues that “the lack of cohering political structures has meant

that Bosnian people are forced to rely on more narrow and parochial survival mechanisms [see chapter two], which has meant that ethnicity has maintained its wartime relevance as a political resource” (1999: 195). The fear of becoming a minority in an unstable political environment compels people to look for protection within their own ethnic community (see also Appadurai 1998). As such, BiH statehood is undermined by its own political anatomy. It limits the possibilities of cross-ethnic cooperation, which is only viable when people in BiH regain a sense of political security in their position towards the state. Yet, political instability could only be reduced when “organic compromises [emerge], which [would] pass responsibility and accountability on to Bosnian actors” (*ibid.*: 198); and which would re-establish non-discriminatory responsive political institutions (see also Pickering 2007).

Twenty years later, Chandler’s call for greater political autonomy is still relevant. The Dayton constitution is still in effect - source of many frustrations - and sustainable peace remains elusive. In 2015, in an article for *The Guardian*⁹, former correspondent for the Balkans Julian Borger assesses the status quo of Bosnian society. Borger highlights that: “Dayton is one of the most frequently used words on the evening news. It is a noun, a verb, an adjective – a synonym for inertia, neglect and despair.” Borger aptly points out the flawed post-conflict situation Dayton created: besides recognizing Bosnian Serb territorial gains, institutionalizing ethnic division and discrimination, “Dayton spawned a political system that is a cash cow for politicians (...) and that is both self-serving and self-perpetuating.” Considering this statement, changing the Dayton constitution seems a far-end political utopia. What does constitute the main observation of this chapter is that the DPA has created a particular political configuration that alienates citizens from the political arena and the decision-making process. By consequence, Dayton precludes any identification with the common BiH state. How, then, does this affect citizen-state relationships *in practice*? To this question I turn next.

⁹ Borger, J. (2015, November 10). Bosnia’s bitter, flawed peace deal, 20 years on. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/global/2015/nov/10/bosnia-bitter-flawed-peace-deal-dayton-agreement-20-years-on>

Chapter Two: Alienated Citizen-State Relations

As the first chapter pointed out, Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) was deconstructed along ethnic lines by nationalist elites in the 1990s, who have remained in power ever since. Common BiH statehood is undermined by parallel government structures in each distinct entity. Despite being officially citizens of the same nation, the three major ethnic groups mainly look towards their own community for political security and survival. People who deliberately identify with the common state or refuse to identify with one of the three major ethno-religious groups are completely marginalized by political practice and discourse. What, then, does it mean to be a citizen of post-Yugoslav BiH? How exactly did the war deconstruct Yugoslav ideology and reconstruct an ethno-nationalist one? Also, how do people experience formalized ethno-politics in the everyday? More importantly, how do people evoke the state in their everyday predicaments?

This chapter argues that wartime social logic, as it was constructed in the early 1990s and institutionalized by the DPA, pervades BiH society up until today. However, twenty years later, ethno-nationalist ideology is having paradoxical results. On the one hand, ideological consent for the nationalist hegemonic project of the ruling class is declining, if not completely absent. On the other hand, ethno-nationalism still creates the political conditions for the reproduction of that project. In other words, ethno-politics create a contradictory relationship between citizens and the state. Citizens simultaneously detach and attach themselves to the state, while the state simultaneously excludes and includes them.¹⁰

The first section of the chapter provides a theoretical framework, based on Louis Althusser's (1970) *State and the Ideological State Apparatuses* and Gramsci's (1992) *State and Civil Society*. Additionally, this section involves Ivana Maček's (2009) *Sarajevo Under Siege. Anthropology in Wartime*. Her work shows how ethno-nationalism, imposed by war, constituted a new 'reality of the day' and redefined people's relationship to each other and their existential conditions. The following sections of this chapter analyze two ethnographic works conducted in Mostar (Hromadžić 2015) and Sarajevo (Jansen 2015) in an attempt to lay bare deficiencies in BiH's contemporary socio-political, economical and ideological configuration; and to disentangle

¹⁰This is not unique to BiH. In her ethnography of the Turkish state, Navaro-Yashin (2002), for example, shows how the most socially and politically marginalized groups of the state are its most passionate supporters. They are structurally excluded, yet ideologically included.

the contradictory citizen-state relationships they produce. Hromadžić's work emphasizes questions of identification and the alienated relationship between BiH citizens and the nation-state. Jansen's work, by looking at everyday existential predicaments and people's evocation of the state, reveals how the Dayton BiH hegemonic project is reproduced, despite the lack of ideological consent.

Changing Notions of Ethno-National Identities by Wartime Experiences

Coherence by Ideology

Althusser's concept of interpellation is relevant to the study of citizen-state relationships because it allows us to understand how nationalist ideology functions and more importantly, why it is failing in BiH society today. Drawing on Marx, Althusser explains that any society sustains itself by reproducing its dominant mode of production, including its means of production and labor power. Its reproduction does not only entail the reproduction of workers' material conditions by wages; or their skills by education. It also entails the "reproduction of its subjection to the ruling ideology or of the practice of that ideology" (Althusser 1970: 133). Society, in which ideology exists, is constituted by two separate bodies: the *infrastructure* (the economic base) and the *superstructure* (the politico-legal (law and the state) and ideology). The state, in turn, is defined by two apparatuses: a Repressive State Apparatus (RSA) and a plurality of Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs). The former functions by violence and aims at producing the political conditions for the latter, which in turn aims at producing the ruling ideology. The ruling ideology, as "the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group" (*ibid.*: 158), secures the coherence and reproduction of society. Althusser notes that these ideas are an illusion, based on imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence. In other words, "ideology is an imaginary representation of the real world" (*ibid.*: 164). Although imaginary, this representation is promoted through different ISAs and their practices, like religion, education, the family, law, and the political. Individuals, then, are subjected to the ruling ideology by participating in the practices of religion, education and so on. Here, Althusser arrives at a crucial conclusion (*ibid.*: 170): ideology interpellates individuals into subjects.

Althusser explains that ideology can only function in the minds of concrete subjects: “the category of the subject is only constitutive of all ideology insofar as all ideology has the function (...) of ‘constituting’ concrete individuals as subjects” (*ibid.*: 171). In other words, ideology interpellates individuals as subjects of the state only to the extent that subjects recognize themselves as subjects of that very state. Interpellation, then, is the process by which ideology constitutes individuals’ identities and transforms them into subjects (*ibid.*: 174). Here, it is useful to involve Gramsci’s (1992) concept of hegemony, which emphasizes how society upholds ideology by cultural, legal, political, social and economical institutions, presentations and practices. Hegemony determines the framework through which participation in these institutions is understood; it sets the ‘rules of the game’. By participation, individuals become subjected to the hegemonic project and its ideology. Interpellation refers to that same process, yet on the level of meaning and subjectivity. People come to understand their political and social conditions in the terms set by the ideology, and recognize themselves as subjects of the hegemonic project. In that sense, Maček’s ethnographic material clarifies Gramsci’s and Althusser’s theoretical framework because it shows how the war deconstructed the Yugoslav socialist hegemonic project and how it transformed Yugoslav subjects into ethno-nationalist subjects. However, as Hromadžić and Jansen will show, due to its specific economic and socio-political configuration, ideological interpellation in BiH brings about some very paradoxical results. Before disentangling these paradoxes, I now address ideological interpellation in the context of BiH.

Interpellation by Everyday Wartime Experiences

How are we to understand ideological interpellation in the Bosnian context? Maček’s anthropological account of the siege of Sarajevo from 1992 until 1996 provides insightful details about wartime experiences of ordinary people. Central to her work stands the argument that ethno-national fragmentation was a result, rather than a cause of the war. Maček develops this argument by investigating how ‘normality’ was deconstructed in various domains of public and private life in Sarajevo. More specifically, she focuses on the deconstruction of the former Yugoslav ruling ideology at the hands of nationalist elites. Maček accounts for different social logics that perpetuated people’s reasoning over the course of the war and how these formed new social

norms. In this process, she explains how wartime ethno-religious loyalties and coping mechanisms reconstructed new social relationships, to which I turn below. In her account of Sarajevo wartime experiences, Maček explicitly defies notions of war as rational and legitimate. In the absence of logic, the author highlights the moral unpredictability and the inherent paradoxes of conventional war accounts. Instead, she “explores Sarajevans’ subjective responses to the death and destruction that engulfed their city and their repeated, though often futile, efforts to make sense of the disturbing and irrational situations in which they found themselves” (Maček 2009: 4).

Althusser’s basic premise is that any given society reproduces consent to its hegemonic project by the continuous subjection of its people to the ruling ideology. In the context of radically disturbed social norms of everyday existence, Maček identifies three different perceptions of war, in which people continuously negotiated and renegotiated their standards of reasoning. In that sense, Maček’s work reveals how the war opened new ideological spaces in which concepts of identification could be redefined. Initially, people were shocked by the outbreak of war. Their peacetime norms collapsed and people struggled to give meaning to the events because they perceived war from a “civilian” perspective: it is unjust and irrational, unpredictable and surreal. This “vacuum of meaning” (*ibid.*: 5) was gradually filled by people’s experiences and their attempts at making sense of the war. By aligning themselves to a warring side, people adopted a ‘soldier’ mode of perceiving war, in which destruction and killing were part of a moral rationale. War, then, necessitated the risk and legitimated the sacrifice. Finally, after shifting between the ‘civilian’ and ‘soldier’ mode of perceiving war, people understood the futility of their explanations. Marked by skepticism, the continuous reconstruction and deconstruction of meaning made people shift to a ‘deserter’ mode of perceiving war. ‘Deserter’ does not imply treason or betrayal to the cause yet denotes the abandonment of “the neat divisions between citizens and armies, friends and foes that mark the civilian and soldier modes (...)” (*idem.*). Maček notes that these three different modes of perceiving war existed simultaneously within people, with all their inconsistencies and preoccupations to negotiate normality. Read within the Althusserian framework, Maček’s work can be understood as explaining how the war reconstructed the Yugoslav hegemonic project, making it impossible for citizens to identify with it. The Bosnian war of 1992-1995 established new political, economic and socio-cultural conditions in BiH, in which old Yugoslav ISAs were redefined by a new ethno-nationalist ideology. As such, ethno-nationalist identification was imposed.

The deconstruction of ‘normal life’, the hegemonic project reproduced by society, makes individuals more susceptible to new ideologies, which in turn redefine ISAs. Keeping up normality and performing peacetime routines was a powerful tool for people to resist the irregular and humiliating conditions of the war. It also helped people to retain a sense of agency. According to Maček, normality was a moral framework for people to guide their actions. The destruction of Sarajevo’s social fabric and material conditions was tempered by people’s attempts to ‘stay normal’, which allowed for “socio-cultural continuity between prewar and postwar life” (*ibid.*: 62). Yet, people called their wartime experiences an ‘imitation of life’, “highlighting their sense that the prewar routines they tried to maintain under the siege had been emptied of their previous meanings” (*idem.*). War parties did everything to make daily routines impossible, by cutting water and electricity for example. People felt powerless, humiliated and ashamed, wondering about the rationale behind these actions (*ibid.*: 64-65).

Consider Althusser. When peacetime routines and practices lose their meaning, the ideology that pervades them loses its capacity of interpellation. Wartime experiences cannot relate to the old Yugoslav ideology: they render peacetime norms and values obsolete. Citizens’ Yugoslav subjectivity, then, was transformed by the war. The struggle for survival necessitated the participation in new wartime practices and reasoning. Consequently, by participating in ‘wartime normality’, former Yugoslav citizens were gradually subjected to wartime ideology. As such, their subjectivity was interpellated as ethnicized and victimized collective bodies. In that sense, Maček’s work shows how ideology assigns subjective meaning to existential normality. By living and participating in a specific existential normality, people, susceptible to its ideology, construct norms and values. War, then, is not only a process of political economic change, but also of socio-cultural change. I now address both these changes.

According to Maček the war facilitated a structural transformation in the economic system, from the Yugoslav welfare system to a war-specific neoliberal capitalism, “(...) based on war profiteering and other crimes” (2009: 84). For example, war efforts put great pressure on ordinary people’s resources, impoverishing them quickly. As the war shifted economic power from the older generation to young adults, moral norms in economic life changed drastically. In the context of endangered provision of basic subsistence, the black market flourished. As a result, new economic elites emerged, defined along ethno-nationalist lines. As Maček (2009: 67, 128-129) explains, the war installed new patron-client networks through which resources, employment,

living provisions, protection and security were acquired.¹¹ With nationalist elites in power, conditions for participating in these networks were defined by ethno-religious affiliation. In relation to Althusser, then, Maček's work shows how ideological interpellation is also achieved through the economic system: by changing the conditions for economic participation, people's subjectivity is transformed accordingly.

Ethnicized and Victimized Collective Bodies

Besides structural changes in the economic system, Maček argues that the war facilitated “a massive political project of substituting ethno-religious national identities for the former Yugoslav ideology of ‘brotherhood and unity’” (2009: 32). Ethno-religious differentiation played a crucial role in this process: “[it] mattered most in how people identified one another as friend or foe (...)” (*ibid.*: 148). Nationalist leaders promoted ethno-religious antagonism, creating animosity between Serbs, Croats and Muslims as religion became the key marker for group affiliation.¹² Maček explains how religious mobilization was, amongst others, facilitated by the imposition of religious education; by the necessity for explicit religious affiliation in order to receive humanitarian assistance; and by distrust between soldiers of different ethno-religious identity. Moreover, war made the search for security primary: “[I]t was precisely the existential threat and fear that pushed [people] closer to their ethno-religious roots” (*ibid.*: 148). Despite people's attempts to resist this pressure, the discrepancy between prewar social standards and wartime lived experiences quickly became untenable. Wartime conditions, the lack of security, changing cultural norms, a new economic system, the break-up of long-standing social bonds, a sense of victimization, and the influx of displaced persons necessitated the renegotiation of social relationships and loyalties. People's behavior became unpredictable: in terms of solidarity it was impossible to know whom to trust. For example, people started to judge each other behavior in terms of ethno-religious identity. Finally, next to existential threats and the fear of political and economical exclusion, Maček also notes how ethno-religious difference was promoted through a renovation of language, greetings,

¹¹For a good investigation and explanation of their functioning, Maček refers to Bougarel et al. (2007).

¹²The author points out that this sense of group belonging did not come from nowhere. Already in the Yugoslav federation, nationalism was a constitutive element of political representation (*ibid.*: 126). However, this did not mean nationalist mobilization was self-evident: essential to being Bosnian was to negotiate ethno-religious differences.

pronunciation and symbols. In short, the war radically disrupted the social fabric and character of Sarajevo and also deconstructed people's sense of identity, which was in part redefined in terms of ethno-religious affiliation.

In relation to Althusser, the war, then, facilitated a radical change on the level of meaning and subjectivity: "Sarajevans both assumed and resisted the creation of new meanings for their national identities" (*ibid.*: 167). Maček explains that in Yugoslavia, people had the possibility to identify nationally as Yugoslav, signaling that "they belonged together despite different ethno-religious backgrounds" (*ibid.*: 188). During the war, however, it became vital for people to know about each other's background "in order to know whether a reliable relationship could be established or maintained" (*ibid.*: 167). The war forced people to participate in the newly defined and reconstructed conditions of life in Sarajevo. Crucial in this process, according to Maček, is the sense of victimization: "Muslims who felt like victims of Serbian aggression condemned Serbs (...)" (*idem.*). Gradually, people's notions of group belonging and perceptions of the other group became subjected to ethno-nationalist ideology: "Over the course of the war, Sarajevans started to interpret some of their everyday experiences and social relations in terms of ethno-national identities" (*ibid.*: 168). As such, people were interpellated as ethnicized and victimized collective bodies.

Lived Experiences of Ethno-Nationalism

Considering the fact that ethno-nationalist identities were a wartime construction, how, then, can we understand lived experiences of citizen-state relations in the *post-conflict* ethno-nationalist society? Drawing on Hromadžić's (2015) work, *Citizens of an Empty Nation: Youth and State-Making in Postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina*, this section attempts to demonstrate how ethno-nationalist ideological interpellation in BiH leads to often contradictory relationships between the nation-state and its citizens. At the forefront of Hromadžić's ethnographic research, conducted in 2006, stands the newly renovated Mostar Gymnasium, "the most potent icon of the postwar peace-building and state-making project, and of the social (re)organization in the segregated city" (Hromadžić 2015: 4). Intended as a symbol of BiH's wider political context, Hromadžić's analysis of the Mostar Gymnasium reveals how the inherent contradiction between internationally imposed

reconciliation projects and institutionalized ethnic division produces, what she calls, an *empty nation*. Central to her work stands the argument that, due to unresolved tensions between experiences of ethnicized everyday life, ethno-politics and international peace-building, the postwar generation of Mostar, and citizens of BiH in general, cannot relate to the BiH nation-state. The empty nation refers to “a category of absence that captures the growing lack of social and political vision for Bosnia-Herzegovina, as it unfolded under Dayton, among its youth” (*ibid.*: 185). In short, Dayton BiH cannot nurture a sense of identification with the common state. Hromadžić’s work, then, conveys the Mostar youth’s paradoxical attitude towards the dysfunctional and segregated postwar BiH state in which they have come of age. I now address this paradoxical relationship.

Simultaneous Attachment and Detachment

If Maček’s work shows how the war accelerated a profound socio-cultural transformation of BiH society, then Hromadžić’s work reveals how Bosnian, Croat and Serb youth experience this transformation. Due to a lack of identification with a cohesive state, she argues, BiH youth “became alienated from the state and its institutions, including the rights and responsibilities of formal citizenship” (*ibid.*: 108). Ethno-politics have created a growing social and mental distance between people, making them oblivious to shared histories and socio-cultural similarities (*ibid.*: 113). The ethnicization of everyday life and spatial segregation make it virtually impossible to learn anything about the ‘ethnic other’, creating “an ideal background against which ethnic nationhood can flourish at the expense of common peoplehood” (*ibid.*: 114). In short, the political configuration and the ruling ideology of Dayton BiH promote ethno-nationalist identification and discourage cross-ethnic interaction, which could generate identification with the common state.

Emphasizing citizen-state relationships on the level of the everyday, Hromadžić explains how the BiH nation-state “emerges as politically and emotionally deserted by its non-Bosniak youth citizens” (2015: 116). Croat and Serb youth do not perceive BiH as a nation in which their ethnic communities could coexist with a Bosniak majority, perceived as a threat. Instead, their sense of belonging - by education, upbringing and practices of ethno-politics - is directed towards their ‘true’ homeland, leaving “their relationship to Bosnia-Herzegovina vague and

underdeveloped” (*ibid.*: 120). For example, Croats have the possibility to attain dual citizenship. Also, the curriculum for Bosnian Croats is entirely oriented towards Croatia, leaving only minimal education about BiH. In turn, the Serbs experience Republika Srpska as their true state; and BiH as an imposed state that endangers their own. A more complicated example are the Serb youth living in the Federation of BiH (the Muslim-Croat entity that still inhabits Serb minorities). According to Hromadžić, they feel attached to both BiH and Serbia, “pointing at the disjunctive tension between the state and the nation” (2015: 128). In short, Croat and Serb youth feel indifferent and detached from BiH, the country they live in, and identify with its neighbors, hence Hromadžić’s *empty nation*.

Hromadžić’s work, then, shows how Serb and Croat youth’s understanding of identification emphasizes ethnic affiliation and is projected onto their ‘true’ homeland, Republika Srpska and Croatia respectively, “generating a Bosnia-Herzegovina empty of its young citizens” (*ibid.*: 129). Consequently, this attitude influences how Bosniak youth understand their sense of belonging. Hromadžić (*ibid.*: 116-117) stresses the ambiguity of their relationship: Bosniak youth automatically equate the BiH nation-state with their Bosniak identity. In contrast to Serb and Croat youth, they only identify with BiH as their ‘true’ homeland. Bosniak youth find it normal that Serb and Croat youth identify with Serbia and Croatia respectively, because BiH is the Bosniak homeland. Simultaneously, however, they also stress the fact that BiH is a multi-ethnic country that belongs to all constituent people who live in it. In other words, Bosniak youth make a differentiation in their perception of BiH. They see it both as the territorially-defined BiH multi-ethnic nation, and as the ethnically-defined Muslim nation (see also Dimitrovova 2002).

Agency in the Face of Interpellation

At this point it seems that youth are very much interpellated by ethno-nationalist ideology. What, then, is the articulated space for agency? During recess, both Croat and Muslim students of the Mostar Gymnasium join each other in the bathrooms to share a cigarette together, linking two key important social practices in BiH: smoking and mixing. According to Hromadžić (2015: 88-102), mixing in BiH has a long-standing tradition as social practice, denoting the persistence of ethnic boundaries and reciprocity of cross-ethnic relations. It refers to prewar notions of respect, intimacy

and sensibility towards ‘the other’, generating “trans-ethnic affiliations and identifications” (*ibid.*: 91). Discouraged by war narratives and the political anatomy of Dayton BiH, postwar generations never experienced mixing on a frequent basis, since public spaces for cross-ethnic sociality are absent. According to Hromadžić, the bathroom in the Mostar Gymnasium, then, is a ‘crack’ unsupervised by ethno-nationalist ideology. Allowing for experimentation with ethno-religious identity, it becomes a subversive and “shared collective space in which cultural intimacy unfolds” (*ibid.*: 93). For example, Hromadžić recounts how in the bathroom, a Croat student mockingly recites verses from the Qur’an, taught to him by a Muslim girl; how a Croat girl openly flirts with a Muslim boy; and how open discussions about religious practices take place.

Here, Hromadžić presents youth’s ‘hidden transcripts’ (Scott 1990). In the case of BiH, ‘hidden transcripts’ are unexpected sites of ‘cultural intimacy’ (Herzfeld 2005) produced in the gaps between cultural fundamentalism and ‘spatial governmentality’ (Sally Engle Merry 2001) – “the ideological, political, and social mechanism of spatial segregation and disciplining of ethnically conceived peoples” (Hromadžić 2015: 11). Considering Althusser’s theoretical framework, ‘spatial governmentality’ is an ISA: it shapes the individual into an ethnically conceived subject through policies of social, political and structural division, destroying memories of a shared past, lived interconnectedness, and “possibilities of a joined future, including supra-ethnic political alternatives” (*idem.*). It denotes how ethnicized subjects are reproduced by the Dayton socio-political order. However, the notion of ‘hidden transcripts’ highlights the fact that youth perform small, marginal acts of subversion against the ruling ideology and produce sites of cross-ethnic interaction. Similar to Maček’s ‘deserter’s mode of perceiving war’, ‘hidden transcripts’ show that individuals, despite being constantly subjected to ideology, do have political agency, in which they take moral responsibility for their own choices. As will become clear, these are the moments in which contradictory citizen-state relationships come to the forefront; in which a sense of numbness and emptiness constantly undermine citizens’ identification with the state. Hromadžić’s work, then, shows how the internationally imposed state-building project, ethno-nationalist practices and discourses, and wartime influenced social morality “drain away the connective tissue from the citizenry and the nation” (2015: 9).

Moments of Contradiction: Anti-Citizens in Display

In relation to Althusser, bathroom mixing shows that ideology needs a material existence (1971: 166): as the practices of the educational ISA do not reach the space of the bathroom, students are free to explore their subjectivities outside ethno-nationalist ideology. However, ideology functions powerfully within hegemony, since Hromadžić (2015: 94) notes that none of the students would imagine repeating this behavior outside the bathroom. Bathroom mixing, then, reflects a stark contradiction. On the one hand, it allows exploration of new social relationships outside ideology. On the other hand, these new social relationships are not sustainable because there is no hegemonic framework, which provides meaning to it. In other words, the bathroom “shows the effects of spatial governmentality, which brings students into proximity to each other, but does not encourage meaningful interaction among them” (Hromadžić 2015: 96).

Hromadžić’s example of bathroom mixing reveals how youth negotiate the tension between the socio-political configuration of Dayton BiH, ethno-nationalist subjectivities, and their desire to ‘mix’ with the ‘other’. On the level of meaning and subjectivity, bathroom mixing shows us that Mostar’s youth, besides ethnicized subjects, are active social agents. Mostar’s youth, and individuals in general, actively engage with their subjectivity and search for ways to assign meaning to their lived experiences. In the bathroom, recognition of the ethnic ‘other’ can lead to cross-ethnic sensibility, yet it does not find a place in the hegemonic project. This contradiction leaves youth increasingly frustrated and disappointed with the state, generating a further alienation from it. In order for new social relationships to develop, citizens need new articulated spaces of public sociality in which they can process the violent past and nurture sustainable cross-ethnic friendships.

Besides bathroom mixing, Hromadžić points out other ‘hidden transcripts’. In everyday speech and practices, she describes (*ibid.*: 109-112) how ordinary citizens appropriate ethno-nationalist discursive elements as a way to express cross-ethnic solidarity. For example, the term ‘narod’, used by all ethnic groups, denotes an ethnic category of exclusionary belonging, yet people also use it to make an inclusionary identification with ‘the common people’, as opposed to ‘the corrupt politicians’. In that way, people position themselves across or outside imposed ethnic categories (see also Markowitz 2010). Addressing common predicaments - poverty, corruption, and political instability - this appropriation constitutes a counter-discourse that challenges and

reinserts “the existing pervasiveness of ethnicity in contemporary Bosnia-Herzegovina” (Hromadžić 2015: 132). Furthermore, cross-ethnic solidarity is supported by a ‘common Bosnian mentality’, referring to people’s articulation of shared grievances with politics and the state. This way, ordinary people create “a meta-discursive space of political solidarity and critique, and a search for dignity” (*ibid.*: 136). Another example is cross-ethnic dating (*ibid.*: 139-155). In defiance of ethno-nationalist ideology and social segregation, Hromadžić recounts of Mostar youth from different ethnic groups experimenting with love for the ‘other’. In addition, she speaks of youth from mixed marriages that are not recognized by the state, since no supra-ethnic national category of identification exists. Officially, the BiH state automatically categorizes these youth according to the ethnicity of their fathers. However, in their environment, determined by ‘spatial governmentality’, these mixed youth are socially and politically marginalized. Ideologically excluded, they become what Hromadžić calls *anti-citizens*: the citizen-subject whose subjectivity is captured in-between; both belonging and not belonging to the state.

Two other examples illustrate the notion of *anti-citizen*. First, in the face of pervasive corruption, citizens complain they lack the social, cultural and economic capital to negotiate the tensions between their moral framework and the new market economy. Corruption has become part of the social fabric in such unfamiliar ways that it problematizes ethical notions of right and wrong. As such, it precludes youth to be moral citizens. “[This] shows that ordinary people are not in control of their own moral actions and interpretations of these actions” (*ibid.*: 162). Second, Hromadžić mentions “Bosnian negative exceptionalism” (*ibid.*: 173), denoting how youth in BiH perceive their position in relation to neighboring countries. In their perception, “even Albania is ahead of them” (*ibid.*: 175). This reflects a sharp distinction in perception between BiH, where one can only survive by illegal practices (withdrawn from the state), and other countries, where one can pursue life projects as a moral, respectable citizen (inside the contours of the state).

Hromadžić’s work, then, portrays youth as morally confused, demoralized and unmotivated postwar political agents: citizens and anti-citizens, who simultaneously participate in and resist against state practices, yet distance themselves “from a direct responsibility and political engagement with [its] structures” (*ibid.*: 137). Instead of creating coherence between state and society, the ruling ideology in BiH causes citizens’ alienation from the state. Yet, agency articulated outside this ideology, present in ‘hidden transcripts’ of cross-ethnic solidarity, relates to the multi-ethnic character of that same state. As a result, citizen-state relationships in BiH are

highly contradictory, constituted by simultaneous attachment and detachment. The ruling hegemony in BiH – constituted by ethno-politics, ethnicized everyday life, and nationalist ideology - fails to generate cohesive political subjects for the reproduction of the state.¹³ How, then, does the BiH state reproduce *itself* as a *multi-ethnic democracy*, despite being constantly undermined by its ruling hegemony? The first chapter explained that the BiH state is sustained by supra-state bodies. In that respect, it does not need ideology to reproduce itself. The ruling hegemony, however, is reproduced by more mechanisms than ideology alone that interpellate individuals as ethnic collective bodies. I now turn to these mechanisms.

Ethno-Nationalism and Existential Predicaments

How can we assess the success of ethno-nationalism on the level of meaning and subjectivity? In the immediate aftermath of the war, the sense of victimization strengthened ethno-religious antagonism (see also Helms 2007, 2013). As livelihood and security depended on group affiliation, postwar BiH citizens became imbued by ethno-nationalism. Yet, as we have seen, ideological interpellation did not fully succeed: people defy practices and discourses of ethno-politics, revealing a contradictory relationship with the state of simultaneous attachment and detachment. In that sense, on the level of meaning and subjectivity and on the level of the everyday, individuals have a strong capacity to resist ideology - while simultaneously participating in its hegemonic project (see also Gramsci 1992; Scott 1990). Althusser and Gramsci make us understand that hegemony is reproduced through ideology. Yet, if it is not by ideological consent, how, then, is the Dayton hegemonic project reproduced? What rationale inspires citizens' participation? Are wartime ethno-nationalist identities as prominent as Hromadžić argues them to be? How do people experience the state with regard to their everyday existential predicaments? What do people expect from the state? Drawing on Jansen's work, this section of the chapter will disentangle the contradictory mechanisms of reproduction of the Dayton hegemony that interpellate BiH citizens. Most crucial here is the argument that the political conditions for the reproduction of the Dayton ruling class are created by the very same ethno-nationalist configuration that undermines the functionality of the Dayton BiH state.

¹³In fact, no ruling hegemony can produce cohesive political subjects, yet the case of BiH makes this highly visible.

Shared Predicaments and Desires

Jansen's (2015) work, *Yearnings in the Meantime. 'Normal Lives' and the State in a Sarajevo Apartment Complex*, is crucial in understanding contemporary citizen-state relationships. Arguing that questions of identity cannot encompass all dimensions of life in BiH, Jansen chooses not to privilege this conceptual approach. If Hromadžić's work shows how ethno-politics sustain the salience of ethno-nationalist identities in everyday life, then Jansen's work shows how, when it comes to reasoning about the state, ethnic categories are perceived as an implication, not a cause to people's predicaments (Jansen 2015: 11). At the core of Jansen's analysis stand the yearnings of citizens for 'normal lives' in a 'properly functioning state', conveying shared concerns about their health care system, education, city transport and inefficient administration. Jansen notes that a compelling tendency in BiH politics is that every question regarding what the state should *do* is automatically overshadowed by questions of what the state should *be*. In opposition to this political intervention, Jansen treats citizens' reasoning about statecraft as legitimate concerns in themselves, without automatically linking them to questions of BiH statehood, and ethno-nationalism. This way, so he argues, one can discern shared socio-economic and existential predicaments between different ethnic groups (*ibid.*: 14).

Addressing the lack of a system, Jansen's interlocutors consistently bring up a sense of abandonment by the state. Central in his research on statecraft are issues of public transportation (*ibid.*: 59-86) and education (*ibid.*: 87-119), two crucial elements of 'normal lives'. Jansen argues that a dysfunctional bus and school system prevent any possibility for ordered predictability. It reflects the lack of ordered frameworks, "which people desire in order to organize their daily routines in particular ways" (*ibid.*: 70). This is what Jansen calls 'gridding' (*ibid.*: 69-73), the spatio-temporal calibration of one's life necessary to pursue predictable life trajectories. The desire for 'normal lives', then, becomes a desire for predictable regularity, in the form of ordered frameworks, or 'grids'. Grid desire, then, is "a social configuration in which certain structures of expectations were made regular and ordered in an institutional manner" (*ibid.*: 81). In short, it expresses a desire for proper statecraft; a desire to be incorporated into the state's frameworks; for their concerns to be recognized as legit; and to have access to state provision.

Here, Jansen arrives at a crucial issue: Dayton BiH lacks sufficient state gridding. His interlocutors consistently "bemoaned insufficient state gridding as one key reason why they were

still unable to lead ‘normal lives’” (Jansen 2015: 117). As a way of assessment, people often compared their current situation with wartime efforts to lead ‘normal lives’, despite its extreme suspension. For example, the ‘Staircase Schools’ (*ibid.*: 94-97) were organized as emergency educational activities in the lower staircases of apartment blocks. Establishing a degree of predictability, going to school was a way “to calibrate the flow of life back to ‘normal’” (*ibid.*: 103). According to Jansen, the self-organized wartime educational system reflected a struggle of people to be incorporated into “gridding of improvement, and their investment in becoming (...) part of the legible populations” (*ibid.*: 116). However, after the war ended, this struggle was largely ignored by the new BiH state: only in 2010 were the ‘staircase schools’ accommodated in state-funded purpose-built premises. The ‘staircase schools’, then, exemplify the lack of statecraft: provisional wartime measurements attained a permanent character due to the state’s neglect of citizens’ efforts, and its unwillingness to ‘normalize’ their postwar conditions.

Jansen argues that the state’s failure to make ‘normal lives’ possible influences reasoning about the BiH state, denoted by two key concepts: the elusiveness of a state effect and spatio-temporal entrapment. ‘State effect’, here, in line with Mitchell (1999), conceptualizes “the state as a structural effect, the powerful, apparently metaphysical effect of [state] practices that makes such structures appear to exist” (quoted in Jansen 2015: 128). In his analysis, Jansen is not so much concerned with top-down structural effects of the state, such as discipline, legibility or interpellation (see Foucault 1991; Scott 1998; Althusser 1971). Rather, Jansen investigates how people’s “grid desire calls forth the state as a structural effect” (*ibid.*: 129). Spatio-temporal entrapment, on the other hand, reflects a shared feeling among BiH citizens that the immediate postwar situation has remained unchanged for the past twenty years. I now address both concepts in more detail and analyze how they affect people’s subjectivity.

Political Conditions: An Elusive State Effect and Spatio-Temporal Entrapment

If Maček’s work highlights how wartime experiences and ethno-religious antagonism pervaded people’s reasoning, then Jansen’s work focuses on how “the elusiveness of a state effect in Dayton BiH pervaded people’s reasoning” (Jansen 2015: 129). Consider Althusser’s framework, which notes that the state is reproduced by its legal-political and ideological superstructure (1971: 148).

Both the RSA and the ISAs work to create the political conditions by which the reproduction of the ruling class' domination is secured. In the case of BiH, however, the state and its ideology work in contradictory ways: the *multi-ethnic* BiH state is constituted by *ethno-nationalist* ideology. This ideology, instead of supporting, undermines the legitimacy and functionality of the state. As such, Dayton BiH's political anatomy generates dysfunctional state institutions. In turn, this confirms the ruling ideology. Jansen explains how "every failure to reach a compromise on reforms of BiH statehood was a confirmation of what the [nationalist] parties wished to prove, namely that BiH could not work anyway." (Jansen 2015: 131). As a result, people lack trust in BiH state institutions, and desire them to function properly. In that sense, the desire for a system is the very structural state effect of Dayton BiH. "Dissatisfied with the kind of low-intensity interpellation that the 'actually existing' state provided, [people] themselves enacted interpellation, as if willing a state effect into being" (*ibid.*: 154).

The elusive state effect generates contradictory citizen-state relationships. On the one hand, every problem is brought back to the lack of a system. On the other hand, the cause of this problem is identified in that very system: the political anatomy of the Dayton BiH state and its high structural dispersion. "The mantle of the state was claimed by a myriad of institutions, leaving people without a clear address for their appeals" (*ibid.*: 137). In that sense, the feeling that in BiH no system exists does not stem from a *lack* of statecraft but from an *overload* of the *wrong kind* of statecraft. Paradoxically, "the state [seemed] simultaneously excessively present and absent" (*ibid.*: 144). Similar to Hromadžić, Jansen highlights how citizens of BiH cannot relate to the state in their everyday experiences. Disappointed in the dysfunctional state, people's sense of civic duty and willingness to engage with the state is reduced. Simultaneously, however, the solution for their predicaments is projected onto that same state, denoting a constant maneuvering between detachment and attachment. In other words, people project their evocations of a not-yet state, which they desire to engage with, onto the contours of the actually existing state, from which they disengage.

Similarly, spatio-temporal entrapment produces the idea that the system necessary for people's life projects is yet to come. By investigating practices of 'chasing' - practical activities aimed at improving livelihoods - Jansen explains how people experience an inadequate existential mobility. Especially in comparison with the "predictable and regular collective movement gridded in Yugoslav institutions" (*ibid.*: 167), Jansen's interlocutors still feel they are running in circles.

Jansen's concept of Dayton BiH Meantime, then, refers to the limbo in which people have been living not-quite-postwar lives, a period between war and peace. It denotes a "lack of a clear ending, of a radical break between an abnormal past of violence and a future of 'normal' forward movement" (*ibid.*: 172). 'Normal lives', then, become associated with upward trajectories, linear models of continued improvement. Often shaped by recollections of life in Yugoslav times, people's evocations of 'normal lives' emphasize themes such as employment, living standards, social welfare, freedom, relative social equality, and foreign travel.¹⁴ 'Normal lives', in the reasoning of Jansen's interlocutors, refer to the ability to reproduce one's livelihood; the prospects of a better future (*ibid.*: 163-166).

Often, the road into Europe is proposed as a solution to the sense of collective entrapment. However, Jansen points out that "in everyday terms, EU accession is a little effective device of mobilization" (2015: 176), only reaffirming BiH's semi-peripheral status. Crucial, here, is the point that Jansen's interlocutors were mainly concerned with attaining 'normality', shifting their attention "away from cultural otherness to an economy of movement" (*ibid.*: 184). Regardless of ethno-nationalism, people want to move away from the Dayton status quo, towards proper statecraft and 'normal lives'. "Complaints rarely directly targeted the so-called 'state' or 'shared' BiH institutions but 'the state' in a generic sense. While all roads continued to lead to Dayton, here the key point (...) was one of functionality" (*ibid.*: 153).

Low-level Engagement and Mechanisms of Reproduction

In relation to people's subjectivity, the lack of statecraft and spatio-temporal entrapment imply a crucial consequence for Dayton BiH citizens' horizon of aspirations. 'Normal lives' are impossible in the current political configuration, yet people are necessitated by everyday predicaments to participate in the political hegemony of Dayton BiH. This contradiction, the lack of consent and the necessity to participate, "facilitated a low level of reasoned engagement in collective action for the near future. Many distance themselves from anything they considered 'politics' altogether" (*ibid.*: 180). In that sense, Jansen's work reveals how the DPA has

¹⁴ This attitude, by which people refer to a socialist past in assessing their current predicaments, is common for post-socialist countries (see also Bošković 2013; Oushakine 2009).

effectively disabled people's *actively engaged* political subjectivity by facilitating "nationalist organizing at expense of all other forms of politics (...); failing to deliver a proper end to the war and preventing the establishment of a 'normal state', as a platform for renewed collective movement" (*ibid.*: 174). As such, the domination of nationalist elites is reproduced.

In other words, ethno-politics automatically hijack any attempt to deal with citizens' desires for 'normal lives'. Ethno-nationalist discourse brings every issue of functionality or movement back to the issue of BiH's legitimacy. This political intervention evades questions of accountability and produces low-level engagement with the state. In that sense, in similar vein to Hromadžić's work, Jansen's work shows how formalized ethno-politics of Dayton BiH sustain the existential and subjective conditions that generate apathy towards the state. A crucial difference, here, is that for Hromadžić, ethnic identification is at the core of citizens' alienation from the state. In opposition, Jansen argues that "the fact that 'normal lives' were at the heart of shared concerns thus points to the limits of any nationalist hegemonic project by the Dayton ruling caste" (2015: 195). On the level of everyday survival, BiH citizens are not preoccupied with ethno-nationalist identities. "[E]vocations of the state more commonly emerged in a language of 'system' and 'movement'" (*ibid.*: 196). In that sense, people become subjects not by ideology, but by the reproduction of livelihoods. "Instead, interpellation occurred through the projection of ['normal lives']" (*ibid.*: 197).

How can we understand citizens' lack of ideological consent with the hegemonic project of the Dayton ruling class, and their participation in its very reproduction? Jansen points out that a relatively high level of formal political participation exists. Drawing on Bojičić-Dželilović (2013), he explains how, during the war, nationalist parties monopolized the appropriation of BiH's public resources, transforming and controlling the material channels through which to pursue life projects. Consequently, "mechanisms of clientelist allocation [became] crucial to the reproduction of lives" (Jansen 2015: 213). Jansen elaborates that people participate in these patron-client networks regardless of ideological consent. Since they are dependent on the hegemonic project, people participate not in terms of ethno-nationalist affiliation but in terms of everyday necessity. "It [is] impossible to pursue even the most basic life projects, let alone to 'get on', without an informal connection" (*ibid.*: 208). In other words, Jansen argues that no ideological interpellation takes place within these practices of allocation, because "the 'actually existing state' of Dayton BiH did not rely on any ideology or fantasy to be publicly upheld" (*ibid.*: 215).

This seeming contradiction - the failure of ethno-politics to generate ideological consent, yet its persistence in creating the political conditions for its reproduction – is essential in understanding citizen-state relationships in BiH. Citizens are ideologically disengaged from the state, yet pragmatically engaged in its very reproduction. Althusser explains how interpellation only works if the state recognizes individuals as being part of its apparatus, and if individuals recognize themselves as subjects of that state. In line with Althusser’s framework, Jansen’s argument makes us understand that people are always interpellated by the hegemonic project of the state. In the case of Dayton BiH, however, interpellation works in contradictory ways: it takes place not by recognition but by neglect. By the lack of statecraft and spatio-temporal entrapment citizens are forced to participate in the Dayton hegemonic project, defined by nationalist elites’ patron-client networks. As such, political subjectivity in Dayton BiH is characterized by *necessitated ethnicized clientelist engagement* with the state apparatus. Paradoxically, people become subjects of the state without the state acknowledging them as citizens, hence the feeling of abandonment. Jansen shows us that, in a desperate effort to be recognized, citizens enact this interpellation in their evocations of the state themselves. The state remains the body-politic to which people turn to in their aspirations for ‘normal lives’.

Yet, this is not enough to reproduce hegemonic rule. In addition, the Dayton ruling class profiles itself as the only competent actor “most likely to deliver the ‘system’ that would allow [people] to unfold [normal lives]” (*ibid.*: 196).¹⁵ As a result, in the face of a ‘temporary’ dysfunctional system (Dayton BiH Meantime) - that leaves citizens unaddressed as political subjects - the only way to pursue life projects is by party membership and by joining patron-client networks. Crucial, here, is that the political agency this participation might imply is flawed by ethno-nationalist appropriation of the political agenda. In their effort to be recognized/interpellated/encompassed by the state, do people, then, have the possibility to articulate space for political agency outside ethno-politics? How can people assert their socio-economic predicaments in the face of ‘vital national interests’? Additionally, what are the challenges of asserting political agency outside the state apparatus? By analyzing moments of resistance and civic action, I now address these questions.

¹⁵This is not unique to BiH. In his ethnography of the Georgian state, Frederiksen (2014), for example, explains how the state gains legitimacy by promising to address certain social issues in the projected future. As such, the *would-be state* renders these problems unproblematic in the present, and thus they remain unaddressed.

Chapter Three: Engaging the State

At this point, one could easily imagine how unresolved wartime issues, alienation from the state and socio-economic predicaments pervade BiH society with a sense of despair. The first chapter explained how ethno-nationalism informed the post-conflict state-building process of BiH. The Dayton constitution entrenched a self-serving ‘divide-and-rule’ technique for nationalist elites to keep questions of accountability at bay. The second chapter explained how legal ethno-nationalist categories contrast with lived experiences of cross-ethnic solidarity and shared socio-economic predicaments. The unresolved tensions between the internationally imposed and sustained ethno-nationalist socio-political order – interpellating people as ethnicized and victimized collective bodies – and the impossibility to lead ‘normal lives’, caused many to disengage from the state. Demoralized and frustrated, people are left with an *uncultivated* political subjectivity and sense of citizenship. Desperate to get along in these paralyzing and numbing conditions, people – cynically at best, pragmatically at worst – participate in the only viable option they are presented with: to join the corrupt networks of politicians, which have come to constitute so-called shadow economies (Nordstrom 2004). Citizens in BiH are, by consequence, *clients* or *beneficiaries* of the nationalist elites, while official state provision itself remains dysfunctional.

As of 2013, however, this has changed. In June 2013 and February 2014, protests erupted all around BiH, calling either for the government to ‘do their jobs’ or to step down. In late 2015, two forms of civic action – one NGO-based, one grassroots based - caught the attention of regional media: the Sarajevo Youth Summit (SYS), organized by the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR), and *Dobre Kote* [good neighborhoods]. How can we understand these events and campaigns? If anything, I argue, these are moments of resistance, openly and silently declared (Chin & Mittelman 2000), which reflect the impatience and dissatisfaction of the people with the state. These are moments in which citizens renegotiate their relationship with the state by devising alternative engagements between themselves and the state apparatus, but also amongst each other. How, then, did participants in protests and neighborhood projects relate to the state? What notions of identification did they evoke as they contested dominant modes of state authority? Do these events reflect a transformation in political agency? By relating these events to the political and socio-economic background of BiH, my analysis will investigate their characteristics, discourses

and objectives, emphasizing the challenges and limitations of collective political action in BiH. The first two sections deal with the “JMBG protests” (see below) of June 2013 and the February Revolts of 2014. The next two sections deal with YIHR, the SYS and Dobre Kote.

Re-opened Space for Political Agency

Assuming Agency in the Face of Neglect

On June 5th, 2013, a small group of citizens gathered in front of the BiH federal parliament building in Sarajevo. Addressing years of political inertia, young mothers with children urged politicians to ‘do their jobs’. Protests in front of the parliament are nothing new in BiH. At least once a week some kind of group - pensioners, war veterans or factory workers - laments the government’s bad performance in front of the building. Hence, not much attention was paid to the concerns of this normally silent part of the population. The next day, however, numbers quickly started growing to over a thousand.¹⁶ The protesters resolved to block movement in and out of the parliament building as long as their demands were not met. Remarkably, their core demand only contained four letters: JMBG. Standing for *jedinstvi matični broj građana* [unique master citizen’s number], the acronym refers to the basic ID registration number one is assigned at birth. It provides citizens, as in any other country, with basic social, economic and political rights.

As of February 2013, the government of BiH had stopped issuing these ID numbers. Reason was the parliament’s reluctance to implement a decision by the Constitutional Court calling for the amendment of the law regarding citizen’s registration (some municipalities in the Serb entity were not included in that law). In May 2011, the court had instructed parliament to bring the law in line with the constitution. As usual, parliamentarians could not come to an agreement, presenting the issue of legislation yet again as a question of ‘vital’ ethno-nationalist interests. In January 2013, the Court, abolished the law for citizen’s registration altogether. As of that moment, all newborn babies remained legally unrecognized. Not able to issue personal ID numbers, administration offices stopped to issue valid passports as well. By May 2013, a baby

¹⁶*Al Jazeera* (2013, June 11). Thousands protests over Bosnia baby ID row. *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved from <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/europe/2013/06/2013611152720320390.html>

girl, Belmina, needed urgent medical treatment in Germany. Without a passport, however, she could not leave BiH. When Sarajevo media picked up on the story, things started to stir. Initial pressure in the first week of June forced politicians to provide an ad hoc solution: Belmina was assigned a temporary ID number and passport, so she could go abroad.

However, people were not satisfied with this temporary solution, as other babies remained unrecognized. Moreover, it reflected a recurring pattern, in which politicians, profiling themselves as benevolent patrons, provided a way out of yet another Dayton stalemate. By the following week, the streets of Sarajevo were full with people.¹⁷ This time, not only young mothers, but also students, pensioners, war veterans, and factory workers came outside to express their long-simmering dissatisfaction with the government. Nationalist parties were quick to condemn the protests in their usual language, blaming each other for the problem at hand. Calling it a ‘hostage crisis’, both Serb and Croat politicians stated that the protests were a ‘Bosniak-orchestrated’ attack on their representatives in parliament. Consequently, Serb and Croat politicians refrained from coming to parliament, after which it stopped working all together. The old ethno-nationalist ‘divide-and-rule’ strategy did not work, however, as protestors explicitly rejected any political and ethno-nationalist appropriation. When a second baby experienced the same fate as Belmina mid-June and died in the hospital, people in Banja Luka, Mostar and Tuzla took to the streets in solidarity with the JMBG protestors of Sarajevo.¹⁸ Over five thousand enraged citizens called for the government to do their job, giving them an ultimatum: if the government would not have solved the problem by the end of the month, they would come out calling for their resignation.¹⁹ Next to demonstrations, the organizers called for campaigns of civil disobedience, such as non-payment of utility bills.²⁰

¹⁷ Arnautović, M. (2013, June 15). Bebolucija konačno probudila građane BiH. *Radio Slobodna Evropa*. Retrieved from <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/bebolucija-konacno-probudila-gradjane-bih/25018094.html>

¹⁸ Pasic, L. (2013, June 20). Bosnia’s babies in limbo. *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved from <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2013/06/201361913650303543.html>

¹⁹ *Klix*. (2013, June 11). Protesti se nastavljaju, parlamentarci dobili ultimatum. *Klix.ba*. Retrieved from <https://www.klix.ba/vijesti/bih/masovni-protesti-u-sarajevu/130611044#2>

²⁰ *Euronews*. (2013, July 1). Bosnia: facing political inertia, #JMBG protests call for civil disobedience. *Euronews*. Retrieved from <http://www.euronews.com/2013/07/01/bosnia-facing-political-inertia-jmbg-protests-call-for-civil-disobedience->

Colloquially tagged as ‘bebolucija’²¹ [baby-revolution], parallels between the ‘JMBG movement’²² and anti-regime protests in Brazil, Turkey, Egypt and Bulgaria are readily apparent. In a similar vein, a small issue quickly evolved into widespread anti-government protests, tapping into years of dissatisfaction with a corrupt political class that plundered the country in all impunity. In the case of BiH, “a seemingly insignificant administrative issue ignited an unprecedented movement of civic resistance.”²³ More importantly, the issue of personal ID numbers concerned all citizens of BiH since it is the bottom line of the system in which they live. Not allowing people to have their bureaucratic representation, a common right for all ethnic groups, was a step too far that catalyzed deeper frustrations with the political status quo. By expressing the desire to be recognized by the state, people in BiH, for the first time in decades, organized themselves as citizens and as citizens only. Bringing politics back into the public domain, the JMBG protests, then, generated political meaning to BiH citizenship. A meaning, as Hromadžić highlighted, that was constantly undermined by ethno-politics. People demanded to be encompassed by the state as individual political subjects, not as collective ethnic bodies. This reflects, again, contradictory citizen-state relationships in BiH: despite the state being highly undesirable, citizens wanted to be included by that very state. In line with Althusser and Jansen, it reflects a desire for interpellation by the state, since interpellation is the first step in becoming a subject. One has to become a subject before one can claim political agency. The JMBG protests, then, were a claim for political agency. Not to say that people had no agency before the protests, yet it was a different kind of agency that people aspired to. While most protest movements seek to evade the state apparatus, here inclusion in the realm of the state emerges as a condition for political agency and subjectivity. As such, the JMBG protests highlight the limitations of articulating political agency outside the realm of the state apparatus and ideology. If not recognized, one has limited resources of engaging the state.

In the case of the JMBG movement, citizens were not yet recognized as such by the state apparatus. Protesters lacked the political force to pressure politicians into actually executing their

²¹ Mujanović, J. (2013, June 11). “Bebolucija!”: The #JMBG movement in Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Politics Respun*. Retrieved from <http://politicsrespun.org/2013/06/bebolucija-the-jmbg-movement-in-bosnia-herzegovina/#sthash.IvLVcaij.Z4mEf0z3.dpbs>

²² I use the term movement here to denote the reoccurring mobilization of people triggered by the same issue.

²³ Štiks, I. (2013, June 12). ‘We are all in this together’: a civic awakening in Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Open Democracy*. Retrieved from <https://www.opendemocracy.net/igor-%C5%A0tiks/%E2%80%98we-are-all-in-this-together%E2%80%99-civic-awakening-in-bosnia-herzegovina>

demands. Ad hoc solutions, such as temporary ID numbers, seemed to take the steam off the protests. For example, the ultimatum for a permanent solution passed by without spurring further major mobilization.²⁴ Consequently, the state could largely ignore the issue of unaddressed political agency, as it promised to find a solution in the projected future (see also Frederiksen 2014).²⁵ Nonetheless, the JBMG protests tapped into shared concerns, and for the first time these concerns were mobilized outside the framework of ethno-politics. For example, a frequently read slogan was “we’re all in this together”. Hromadžić’s work pointed out similar articulations of cross-ethnic solidarity in the form of ‘hidden transcripts’ in which people would refer to a ‘common Bosnian mentality’. The protests, then, made this commonality highly political and moved the site of agency from the unnoticed, undeclared level of the everyday to the public space of the streets. In the streets, these common concerns with statecraft and citizenship gained momentum and allowed for the development of a common political voice by which people could challenge the state. As such, people’s political subjectivity was *reorientated* away from being an ethnic *beneficiary*, towards being a non-ethnic *citizen* of the state. Despite its short life-span, the JMBG protests could be understood as a *transformation* in the way people assumed agency and an *initiation* of collective political action, as the February Revolts would prove to be the real challenge.

Asserting Agency outside Hegemony: The February Revolts²⁶²⁷

Eight months after the JMBG protests, BiH experienced a second general stir up. On February 4th, 2014, Tuzla²⁸ factory workers organized a protest against the closure of their formerly state-owned companies, which had been declared bankrupt after a corrupt privatization process. Rapidly,

²⁴ Janssen, N. (2013, July 9). De Bosnische babylution. Een revolutie die niet volwassen werd. *Verspers*. Retrieved from <http://www.verspers.nl/artikel/verspers/2721/de-bosnische-babylution/#.WYLqSxWGNdh>

²⁵ Aumann, T. (2013, July 20). De Bosnische babyrevolutie. *MO* Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.mo.be/artikel/de-bosnische-babyrevolutie>

²⁶ For a day-to-day follow up of the events at the time, see <https://balkanist.net/protests-in-bosnia-and-herzegovina-live-blogs-and-updates/>.

²⁷ In discussing the protests and plenums, I mainly draw from the book *Unbriable Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Fight for the Commons*, edited by Damir Arsenijević (2014). The book is constituted by over a dozen contributions. Considering the reference list, I will only refer by (Arsenijević 2014).

²⁸ Tuzla was one of the strongest industrial cities in the former Yugoslavia, immediately giving the protests a social character. Additionally, Tuzla had always been able to resist ethno-politics to a certain extent (Arsenijević 2014: 112). Finally, Tuzla has a legacy of social class struggle: e.g. the post-WWI Husino Rebellion (Arsenijević 2014: 70).

factory workers were joined by students, citizen's associations, youth, women, pensioners, war veterans and other social groups. By February 7th, thousands of citizens had gathered in front of government buildings in major cities as Sarajevo, Bihać, Mostar and Zenica.²⁹ After police aggressively tried to disperse them, the protests quickly escalated into full-scale riots, leading to the cantonal government building in Tuzla being lit on fire.³⁰ In Sarajevo and Mostar, similar violence took place.³¹ Set within conditions of staggering poverty, rising unemployment, systemic corruption, nepotism, and years of political inertia, long-standing discontent with the Dayton regime had finally exploded.

For weeks on, riots and demonstrations filled the streets of BiH, for some prove that a true 'Bosnian Spring' had arrived.³² Mobilized by informal citizen's groups (such as 'Revolt' and 'Udar') civil associations, labor movements and youth organizations³³, protesters' demands addressed both BiH statecraft and statehood. For example, they asked for the resignation of federal and cantonal governments, the reduction of salary for high-ranking officials, investigation into corruption, revision of privatization processes, free and high quality health care, improved working conditions, and other welfare demands.³⁴ Remarkably, these demands resembled those of anti-privatization and anti-government protests around the region (Arsenijević 2014: 84).

In contrast to the JMBG protests, the February Revolts did not want to engage the state but to get rid of it all together. If the JMBG protests were a claim for the recognition of people's political agency as citizens, the February Revolts, then, were an explicit assertion of that political agency. For example, citizens in Tuzla produced a Manifesto³⁵, which, amongst others, demanded a ban on national and religious-based political parties; and the complete restructuring of the country's political anatomy, including the abolition of cantons and entities. Since the BiH political

²⁹ For a map of the protest's dispersion around BiH, see

<https://web.archive.org/web/20140207102210/http://www.klix.ba/gradjanski-bunt>

³⁰ *AFP* (2014, February 8). Bosnian protesters storm government buildings. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Retrieved from <http://www.smh.com.au/world/bosnian-protesters-storm-government-buildings-20140207-hvbn6>

³¹ *Ph/lw* (2014, February 7). Presidency building on fire as Bosnia protests continue. *DW*. Retrieved from <http://www.dw.com/en/presidency-building-under-fire-as-bosnia-protests-continue/a-17417977>

³² Mujanović, J. (2014, February 11). It's spring at last in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved from <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/02/it-spring-at-last-bosnia-herzegov-2014296537898443.html>

³³ Pasic, L. (2014, February 10). Who's behind Bosnia's riots? *Al Jazeera*. Retrieved from <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/02/who-behind-bosnia-riots-201429132930915905.html>

³⁴ For an excellent visualization of the demands of the protests and plenums, see

<https://bhprotestfiles.wordpress.com/2014/05/13/visualizing-the-plenum-demands/>

35R.H. (2014, February 8). Manifest "Nova Bosna i Hercegovina" – Pročitajte zahtjeve grupe Udar i Revolt. Haberba. Retrieved from <http://www.haber.ba/vijesti/bih/74104-procitajte-zahtjeve-grupe-udar-i-revolt>

and administrative apparatus consumes over 66 percent of the state budget (see footnote 23), these political demands reflected the socio-economic character of the February Revolts. It was a matter of redistribution: people were hungry, in all three languages. Solidarity demonstrations in Croatia and Serbia underlined this, as they defied nationalist interpretation of the protests.³⁶ The local puppet-media owned by the Dayton ruling class, however, was quick to de-politicize the protestors, calling them ‘hooligans’ and ‘terrorists’. International media as well could not make any sense of the protests, framing them in Orientalist and ethno-nationalist terms.³⁷

The February Revolts reflected a widespread, cross-ethnic dissatisfaction with the state and its incompetence to address citizens’ daily socio-economic predicaments. Demonstrators explicitly rejected any political appropriation and stressed the grassroots character of their fight. Besides demonstrations, people went on strike and occupied government buildings and factories. Resigned politicians would be replaced and experiments of self-organization would flourish. Professional political and grassroots organizations (such as workers unions, communist, non-nationalist and partisan political parties, and civil organizations) would help set up so-called plenums. In a context where deep aversion for politics is the norm, the plenums came as a real revelation. They gathered citizens from different walks of life: students, youth activists, urban activists, artists and film-makers, workers, pensioners, war veterans, women, the disabled, intellectuals, academics, union members, and many more of the non-ruling classes.

Plenums were organized throughout the largest part of BiH, from February until late April 2014. In smaller cities, such as Prijedor or Stolac, plenums were held only once or twice. In larger cities, such as Sarajevo and Tuzla, they occurred more frequently. Numbers of participants would range from a couple of hundred to over a thousand, depending on the place. In their essence, the plenums were a way for citizens to practice politics; to organize their spontaneous mobilization on the streets in a more structured fashion.³⁸ As such, protests and plenums worked together to keep a new body-politic functioning (Arsenijević 2014: 49): protests provided mobilization power to put pressure for the demands that were formulated during the plenums. In turn, the plenums allowed

³⁶*Vision*. (2014, February 21). Solidarity protests for Bosnia reach neighboring Serbia. *Vision*. Retrieved from <https://web.archive.org/web/20140221133810/http://www.vision.org/visionmedia/visionvideos.aspx?id=80306>

³⁷ Bieber, F. (2014, February 15). Not making any sense of the Bosnian Protests: International reporting. Retrieved from <https://florianbieber.org/2014/02/15/not-making-sense-of-the-bosnian-protests-international-reporting/>

³⁸ Antić, M. (2014, February 14). Sometimes a plenum is just a plenum. *BH Protest Files*. Retrieved from <https://bhprotestfiles.wordpress.com/2014/02/16/sometimes-a-plenum-is-just-a-plenum/>

for the political agenda set by the protests to move away from the streets, where it could easily have been discredited or appropriated by political parties (*ibid.*: 115).

In the optimistic analysis of intellectuals and academics, the plenums were a new form of ‘direct democracy’ (see also Qvortrup 2013); a new form of political, emancipatory engagement (Arsenijević 2014: 95); an experiment of horizontally organized, non-constitutional politics (*ibid.*: 84), in which new solidarities and long lost commonalities were revoked; in which different socio-economic issues and sites of struggle were connected; in which different social groups found common ground.³⁹ Calling the plenums collective therapy sessions, others thought it was a good way to address the war-related traumas and years of systemic abuse (*ibid.*: 56).

Yet, the plenums also reflected contradictory citizen-state relationship of simultaneous engagement and disengagement with the state. On the one hand, people practiced politics outside the established socio-political order and explicitly rejected political appropriation. Any attempt of preexisting political parties, such as the partisans or the communists, to adopt demands in their agenda was heavily resisted.⁴⁰ On the other hand, demands formulated in the plenums were later sent to cantonal assemblies for execution. However, since the plenums were not taken seriously, demands remained unexecuted. This paradox was a profound limitation for the plenums. In their desire to stay outside of politics, they could do nothing to change politics. In other words, the protestors changed the rule of the game, yet did not notice they started to play a different game all together.

By organizing plenums, citizens had found a way to evade the state apparatus. It allowed them to articulate political agency outside the terms set by the hegemonic project. Yet, the socio-economic demands that constituted their political agenda were not appropriated by the state apparatus. The state apparatus was still very much inclined towards the ethno-nationalist political order. As such, the plenums would face its first limitation: time (Arsenijević 2014: 116). Elections would be held in October 2014, by which the established political parties would reassert the legitimacy of their hegemonic rule. At the plenums, competition over different political visions between participants and organizations was high. What would come out of the plenums, how would they organize their agenda sustainably? Who or what would represent the new political

³⁹In contrast, the JMBG protests were completely disconnected from other social protests, neglecting wider issues that could possibly relate to theirs.

⁴⁰Reeve, C. (2014, April 2). HOPE. On the Revolts in Bosnia-Herzegovina. *The Brooklyn Rail*. Retrieved from <http://brooklynrail.org/2014/04/field-notes/hope-on-the-revolts-in-bosnia-herzegovina>

agenda? What would be their legacy? What kind of organization would be established to mobilize the socio-economic agenda in the future; or to mobilize a march on the institutions? In their aversion of politics, the plenums could not address these questions. As a result, they did not produce a sustainable alternative to the hegemonic project already in place.

This is not to discredit the plenums, as it was not only a matter of time and political imagination. A second limitation prevented the plenums to evolve: the International Community (IC). Valentin Inzko, High Representative of the UN to BiH, commented that the international community would intervene to preserve the existing power structures (Arsenijević 2014: 117). In other words, the fact that Dayton BiH is an international protectorate emphasizes the limitations of any non-nationalist political alternative that wants to claim state power outside of the ethno-nationalist political order.⁴¹ In that sense, the February Revolts faced a similar dilemma as the JMBG protests: how to assert agency outside the articulated space for political action; outside the realm of ideology and the state apparatus?

This is a common dilemma for any protest movement: how to fight hegemony outside of hegemony, while one is simultaneously subjected to and interpellated by hegemony? It reflects Althusser's theory: as one cannot be totally outside of ideology, one cannot be totally outside of the hegemonic project. In the case of the February revolts, this is reflected by the fact that, indeed, the state apparatus is still the largest employer, as in most countries of the region (Arsenijević 2014: 126). Due to the lack of concrete, small achievements and actual influence on policy making, the plenums gradually lost their mobilization power. Faced with a "foreign-sanctioned nationalist-clientelist machine" (*ibid.*: 91), protesters had to return to that very ethno-nationalist order they had wished to overthrow. Not because they wanted to, but because they depended on the Dayton ruling class for their daily survival. If anything, the February Revolts provided people much needed hope in a desperate situation. It put their socio-economic predicaments on the agenda and introduced progressive politics to BiH, albeit only for a while. Limitations were too strong to overcome. No regime change took place; no socio-political reorganization took place. And, the same political parties won the elections of October 2014.⁴²

⁴¹Schuberth, H. (2014, March 6). Bosnia as a Medicine. *Der Standard*. Retrieved from <https://bhprotestfiles.wordpress.com/2014/03/06/bosnia-as-a-medicine/>

⁴²*BBC World*. (2014, October 13). Bosnian nationalists pull ahead as election results come in. *BBC*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29586853>

Not to say that the February Revolts accomplished nothing, as any assessment of success or failure is beside the point here. Instead, what do the February Revolts teach us about political agency in the face of dilemmas presented by contradictory citizen-state relations? A first point would be that the protests reflect a shift from everyday, undeclared forms of resistance to political, declared forms of resistance; from ‘hidden transcripts’ to a ‘war of movement’ (Gramsci 1992). Hromadžić and Jansen show how people resist interpellation in counter-discourses and counter-practices. In that respect, people did have a form of agency, only not the one they had wished for. They were still interpellated as ethnicized and victimized collective bodies, alienated from the state. The February Revolts, then, caused a shift in people’s agency from the level of meaning and subjectivity to the level of Superstructure and Infrastructure. The revolts were a frontal assault against the politics, ideology and economy of the Dayton ruling class; against the systemic dispossession carried out by their hegemonic project.⁴³ A crucial difference with the JMBG protests, here, is that during the February Revolts, politicians for the first time became afraid of citizens.⁴⁴ This proves that citizens were recognized as re-politicized subjects. Yet, recognition alone is not enough; people’s concerns also need to be acknowledged.

The shift from a ‘war of position’ to a ‘war of movement’ (Gramsci 1992) supports an earlier point made about the JMBG protests in this section. During the JMBG protests, people’s rallying cry was for politicians ‘to do their jobs’. Agency was projected onto the state apparatus, still leaving citizens as subordinated subjects. In contrast, during the February Revolts, people projected responsibility onto themselves. Not only did they claim political agency as such, they also asserted their agency into a newly defined decision-making process outside the state apparatus, the plenums. This allowed them to influence the political agenda, which had long been dominated by ethno-nationalism at the expense of their socio-economic predicaments. After years of passive resignation, people were finally able to throw off the victimhood that had constituted their subjectivities. At that moment, they became *unbriable* (Arsenijević 2014: 9). In that respect, for many participants - who had no earlier experience with politics - the protests and the plenums entailed a shift from the passive victim to the active agent; from the ethnicized and victimized subject to the political subject. Yet, as we have seen, citizens’ socio-economic demands were

⁴³ One could identify the Dayton’s hegemonic project as ‘accumulation by dispossession’ (Harvey 2004), or neoliberal ‘crony capitalism’ (Donais 2002).

⁴⁴ *AFP*. (2014, February 9). Bosnia: Local governments resign after violent protests. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Retrieved from <http://www.smh.com.au/world/bosnia-local-governments-resign-after-violent-protests-20140209-hvbph.html>

largely ignored. After a while, they resumed participation in the nationalist hegemonic project, and became ethnicized subjects again. The dilemma, then, shifts its focus: if hegemony – and interpellation – cannot be escaped, how to fight it from within?

Political and Civic Action

Asserting Agency within Hegemony: YIHR and the Sarajevo Youth Summit⁴⁵

The Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) is a foreign-sponsored NGO with offices in BiH, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia. Its main objective is to provide Balkan youth mental tools to think critically about the past. “We are focused on re-establishing war interrupted dialogue and connections between young people, striving to break the silence about the past that was imposed by parents and society after the war,” says Aldijana Okerić, former employee and project leader of YIHR (personal communication, December 23, 2015). On state-level, YIHR strives for regional cooperation, and the recognition of human rights and civil freedom. On the ground, it tries to reconcile youth with a past they did not experience yet which determines their lives. By street actions, art projects and social initiatives (see fig. 1, 2 and 3) the organization wants to address questions about the past that youth cannot do independently. In that sense, YIHR functions as an alternative to a politically appropriated culture of memorialization embodied in the Sarajevo Red Roses, (dysfunctional) museums, statues and memorial plaques (see also Musi 2015). In opposition to lack of space in formal education to tackle the legacy of the war, NGOs like YIHR play a crucial role in changing youth’s attitude. An attitude, as we have seen, marked by apathy and detachment. Not only does YIHR break the silence, it also engages a new generation into critically dealing with the past by providing them the possibility to discuss, confront and oppose top-down ideological positions. “From non-formal education and field trips to street actions and protests, YIHR uses all means to arm youth against the political appropriation of the past,” says Aldijana. More importantly, it plants the seeds for responsible citizenship.

From October 14th to 16th, 2015, YIHR organized the Sarajevo Youth Summit (SYS). In line with previous editions, it aimed at engaging youth and official representatives from the

⁴⁵This section mainly draws upon previously conducted research in 2015 and personal correspondence with Aldijana.

Western Balkans⁴⁶ and the EU. It was considered to be an opportunity for youth to address relevant and important issues concerning the future of their region; and to present them to regional officials. This way they contributed to the creation of a platform for cooperation and dialogue. “The main topic of the summit’s panel discussion was the legacy of the DPA and the institutionalized ethnic division that persisted over the past twenty years. Basically, this means BiH stagnated and nothing has been done to develop our country,” asserts Aldijana.

Besides emphasizing challenges, the panel discussion focused on the future of BiH. Participants discussed possibilities “for improving the current situation in the light of the future EU integrations; for breaking down and reducing the impact of frozen conflicts in the countries of former Yugoslavia; and for the improvement of rights for vulnerable [minority] groups” (Okerić 2015). At the end of the weekend, participants published a declaration.⁴⁷ It formulated youth’s demands, addressing governments of the Western Balkans. Besides asking for the amendment of the Dayton constitution, the declaration mainly concerned issues of regional cooperation, freedom of movement, remembrance of war victims, minority rights, youth activism, and the refugee crisis. However, demands were articulated in general terms, without political means for execution. By consequence, this neglected a sense of urgency and left questions of responsibility unaddressed. In short, the well-intended dialogue between youth activists and government representatives remained a paper exercise.

The SYS is distinctive for asserting agency within the articulated space of ‘mainstream’ political and civic action in BiH. It reflects the limits of an NGO-based, politically appropriated civil society. Civil society in BiH has been elaborately dealt with elsewhere (see e.g. Belloni 2001; Chandler 1998, 1999, 2006a; Fagan 2005; Fischer 2006). Relevant for the endeavor of this thesis, however, is how the SYS reflects similar dilemmas of political agency as the JMBG protests and the February Revolts. Instead of setting their own terms of engagement, the SYS highlights the dilemmas of asserting political agency *within* the hegemonic project. Here, a constant risk of appropriation exists. For example, the framework of constructive dialogue - presented by the SYS as the only viable option for civic action - allows hegemonic actors to set the terms of the debate

⁴⁶ Denoting the geographical area of the Balkans has been the topic of many academic debates (Todorova 1996). See also <http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/regions/western-balkans/> for the denotation by the European Commission.

⁴⁷ Martić, L. (2015, November 19). Sarajevo Youth Summit. Retrieved from <http://yih.ba/sarajevo-youth-summit-budi-lider-svijeta-u-kome-zelis-zivjeti/>

and portrays them as the benevolent state apparatus that is concerned with its citizens. Simultaneously, the state apparatus, and the international community, is indispensable for YIHR. It needs to be recognized as an NGO, and funded as such, to allow even the possibility of asserting political agency. Yet, it is the state apparatus that articulates the space in which agency can be asserted. In this particular articulation of civic action, progress is only possible by cooperation and dialogue with the political class.

Nonetheless, as we have seen, individuals' agency is able to resist the constant risk of appropriation. As Althusser explains, interpellation is unavoidable, yet never irresistible. For example, youth activists' primary demand was to amend the Dayton constitution in order to abolish ethno-politics. In a move of irony, participants projected the execution of this demand on the political class that is supported by that very political configuration. They never thought state officials would actually execute their demands, so asked the impossible. As if to say: "The terms of engagement make cooperation impossible. You first set the right terms, and we will cooperate." This is of vital importance in understanding the presented dilemmas by contradictory citizen-state relationships. The SYS, then, reflects how political agency can be asserted within hegemony. Within the contours of top-down articulated space for civic action, youth - by rejecting the terms of engagement with the state apparatus - were able to resist the appropriation of their subjectivity and their agency. As a result, the dilemma shifts its focus another time. If participation entails a constant risk of appropriation, how, then, to set the terms of engagement with the state apparatus in the face of hegemony and ideological interpellation? As will become clear, YIHR cultivates a sense of responsible citizenship that is able to come to terms with this dilemma.

For example, one of YIHR's first projects was an educational program between offices in Belgrade and Sarajevo on the Srebrenica genocide.⁴⁸ Serb and Muslim youth worked together to collect all official information on the genocide, and tried to construct a fact-based narrative free from ethno-nationalist appropriation. This was a "strong message from young people that the past needs to be discussed; that facts need to be established; and voices of victims need to be heard," explains Aldijana. The NGO has a key principle: open and communication about the past. Accordingly, YIHR annually organizes non-formal educational programs such as the *Summer School of Civic Liberties and Activism*; the *School of Different Memories* in Stolac; and the *Peace Camp* in Kozarac. These projects gather youth from different communities and introduce them to

⁴⁸ More information is available online, see <http://www.srebrenica-mappinggenocide.com/en-m/>

topics such as transitional justice, human rights, social activism and critical thinking. In addition, YIHR organizes field trips to different concentration camps and genocide sites. Here, youth have the possibility to speak with survivors. Finally, YIHR mobilizes participants by providing them the necessary means, skills, and incentives to organize projects and actions in their own communities. This way, youth are introduced to different forms of civic engagement and have the possibility to cultivate a political agency away from being a mere *beneficiary* of the state towards an *active participant* in the state apparatus.

The Youth Council is another example of responsible citizenship. Aldijana explains that the Youth Council is a self-made and self-organized youth center that participants achieved to set-up after months of lobbying at local self-governance level. They kept “insisting that the Law on Youth⁴⁹ passed in 2009, which stipulates the rights and responsibilities of youth in BiH, finally saw some decent implementation.” The Youth Council works for the recognition of youth’s needs. “In the past two years, more than two hundred youth were involved in organizing different seminars, training courses, humanitarian actions, art gatherings and movie nights.” Aldijana points out that the role of YIHR is to generate funds from the municipality by establishing a connection between youth and local decision makers. This way, youth have a valid representation on local level. By organizing civic initiative, youth send a strong message to policymakers; it lets them know they will be held accountable. “Additionally, we want the municipality to provide a budget for the participants in the Youth Council for traveling outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina to different training courses and gatherings.” This would allow youth to establish a sustainable network around the Balkan.

On the level of meaning and subjectivity, YIHR is a relevant example of how ethnicized subjectivities can be reshaped. YIHR aspires to cultivate non-prejudiced, well-informed and engaged minds. Participation happens on a non-ethnic basis, promoting cross-ethnic civic solidarity. Workshops, lectures, field trips and street actions allow youth to identify and resist the ideological positions imposed on them by historical narratives and political discourse. As such, the NGO shapes youth into active political subjects capable of asserting political agency within the space for civic action articulated by the state apparatus. By demanding the representation they

⁴⁹The official document is available online, the Youth Council relates to Article 5, see http://mladi.org/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&download=51%3Ayouth-law-fbih&id=2%3Apublikacije&Itemid=87&lang=ba

have the right to and by holding the state accountable on a very local level, youth are able to set their own terms of engagement with the state apparatus and fight appropriation.

This is not to deny that appropriation does not occur. As mentioned above, the NGO-based character of civic action represented here is a limitation in itself. Since YIHR needs the recognition of the state apparatus, its space for asserting political agency is articulated by that same apparatus. In other words, clear boundaries exist between what YIHR can do and cannot do. In addition, as long as nationalist elites control the channels of state allocation and provision, appropriation is always a most likely risk. However, youth's attitude is changing, with some small results. For example, Aldijana and her peers have been engaged in putting pressure for legislation changes. She elaborates: "We asked for [the] harmonization of criminal codes from Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina with [the] ones in Republika Srpska in order to avoid legal insecurity and to provide legal equality for residents of both entities." And, Aldijana also participated in a work-group that was able to pass an Antidiscrimination Law in 2009. Other changes happen on a rather personal level, says Aldijana. "Even if demands are not immediately met by the government, it is still a huge process when young neo-Nazi kids [transform] and [shift] into actual truth tellers in their own local communities."

Using Hegemony to Assert Agency: Dobre Kote⁵⁰ and other community projects

Besides education-oriented civic action, community-oriented civic action exists as well in BiH, more specifically in Sarajevo. In 2016, the Youth Council was able to occupy and clean some parks in the municipality of *Stari Grad* [Old City]. Welcomed by the local community as a much needed initiative, it got positive response from the media.⁵¹ A new project was born, which participants baptized *Dobre Kote* [good neighborhoods]. In the face of neglect, the project looks for abandoned public spaces and transforms them into social spots where people from the neighborhood can meet. Local activists and residents clean the space and introduce a wide range of activities in relation to sports and arts. It started in *Grbavica*, a neighborhood in the south of Sarajevo that endured much of the Serb shelling during the siege. Today, it is a neighborhood with

⁵⁰ For more extensive information on the project, see also <https://dobrekote.ba/>

⁵¹ Mustajbegović, S. (2016, October 9). Dobre Kote za lijepši komšiluk. *Al Jazeera Balkans*. Retrieved from <http://balkans.aljazeera.net/blog/dobre-kote-za-ljepši-komsiluk>

high-rise residential buildings, but also with a lot of unused and neglected public space. *Dobre Kote* involved children from all the primary schools of the area in the process of reviving these spaces (see fig. 4, 5 and 6). Aldijana explains that the plan was to organize “two weekend workshops with [the kids] after the place was transformed. In the future we plan to adjust the space [more] for their needs and wishes.”

As such, *Dobre Kote* re-established a sustainable connection between the local community and its environment. Bringing education and activism together, the initiative emphasizes good societal relations; it allows a new generation to grow up in a context of solidarity and *neighborhoodness*. The project has got great response from all over the country: “Already people from Tuzla and Banja Luka have contacted us to find out more about the project and how it can be transmitted into other cities and local communities as well,” says Aldijana. In that respect, the Youth Council not only teaches youth to engage with the past and the state, it also stimulates participants to look towards the future. By engaging youth into a critical reflection about the legacy they inherited from their parents, the organization creates incentive to think critically about the legacy they want to leave for *their* kids. Aldijana is hopeful: “We decided to take things into our own hands, leading to more positive stories by our own good inspiring examples.”

Dobre Kote engages with issues of urban planning and commercialization of public space that have been observed worldwide (see e.g. Bilsborrow 1998; Islam 2009; Koczberski, Curry & Connell 2001; Kundu & Sarangi 2005). Over the past few years, investments in Sarajevo from the Gulf have skyrocketed, leading to an accelerated process of *dubaization*. In his article for *MO* Magazine*⁵², Pieter Stockmans reports how real estate developers from the Gulf have been closing deals with local Sarajevo politicians, leading to 204 million euro worth of investments in 2014 alone. This situation relates back to the 1994 Law on Ownership Transformation. During the war, the government “conducted the transfer and legal transformation of all non-governmental publicly owned property into state-owned property” (Arsenijević 2014: 36). Since the state apparatus was completely controlled by political parties, those parties became the owners of vast amounts of property. As a result, urban planning has become a private deal-making party between politicians and investors. As of 2008, property was increasingly sold for real estate projects, allowing the further enrichment of a small political class. By now, the hills of Sarajevo are filled with gated

⁵² Stockmans, P. (2016, September 7). Steenrijke Arabieren kopen Sarajevo op. *MO* Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.mo.be/reportage/steenrijke-arabieren-kopen-sarajevo-op>

communities. Since average Bosnian families cannot afford such housing, it often leads to the exclusion and dispossession of the local population. Additionally, in the city itself, corporate finance groups buy up public parks, old buildings, and market places – officially all property of political parties. Sparking a real process of gentrification, the city's outlook has seen some big construction schemes in the past years. For example, the BBI Center, the Sarajevo City Center, and Hotel Bristol are all erected or renovated with money from the Gulf. It is exactly this link between the private business world and politicians that BiH citizens were addressing in February 2014. However, possibility for resistance is limited, as citizens have little say in urban planning. More importantly, the influx of foreign money implicates employment possibilities for local construction firms, architects and house personnel.

In opposition to the commercialization of public space, local urban activists have set up different grassroots organizations that try to reclaim neglected space around Sarajevo. By cleaning them and making them sociable, these organizations allow citizens to invest in their direct environment. In 2013, for example, the Common City Project was founded by the Association for Culture and Art CRVENA [Red]. Conceived by a group of Sarajevo-based artists, film-makers, architects, urban planners, and activists, the initiative struggles for “the preservation and development of urban resources (...), connecting and strengthening progressive forces of resistance against privatization, exploitation and destruction of people, their life and their social world.”⁵³ Another project, *Gradologija* [Citology], maps and visualizes Sarajevo's neglected public spaces. This way, it introduces them to the collective memory.⁵⁴

Similar to *Dobre Kote* is the grassroots organization #H:ART. This initiative - set up by local Sarajevo painters and activists - transforms apartment complexes into public galleries. Residents are invited to sign up on the Facebook page, after which members come over and place different artworks in the staircases, common gardens or entrance halls of the apartment complex. Quite utopian in their objectives, the initiative wants to contaminate residents with a so-called ‘Bosnian syndrome’: “the feeling that is created by excessive exposure to the beautiful and the exalted.”⁵⁵ As such, the initiative re-establishes a connection between residents and their environment. Citizens engage in transforming their everyday context into a vibrant social space,

⁵³ Urban Questions in CRVENA in 2013. (2013). Retrieved from <http://www.crvena.ba/ongoing/gradologija-citology/>

⁵⁴ <http://www.gradologija.ba/menu?tab=vizije>

⁵⁵ #H:ART (2016). Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/pg/HART-566562406840579/about/?ref=page_internal

creating possibilities for mutual interaction, reflection and enjoyment. Here, they nurture common social values and a sense of ownership and responsibility towards their environment.

These three examples reflect the conditions of a postwar urban context, in which citizens participate in the creation of new urban imaginaries and patterns of urban resilience. The projects connect the social component of the city environment with its residents; a connection that had been lost due to war and gentrification (see also Jildirim & Navaro-Yashin 2013). By civic engagement, residents are able to cultivate their social and political agency in more sustainable ways than before. These projects allow citizens to re-establish the connection with their social environment, which contributes to their sense of ownership and civic responsibility. In the process, people also renegotiate social relationships amongst each other. They become a 'neighbor' that can perform its 'neighborly duty' – an aspect of pride and self-esteem in Yugoslav times - in a safe and amiable environment. As such, political subjectivity is informed by new ideas of active engagement, which allows citizens to renegotiate their alienation from the state.

Local communities, then, become more resilient in facing the state. In their engagement with the state apparatus, residents develop capacities to pressure representatives into recognizing their concerns as legitimate and to advance their predicaments about living conditions and urban planning on the agenda. In that sense, community projects have found a way to establish a much nuanced compromise with the dilemmas presented by contradictory citizen-state relationships in BiH. As previous engagements with the state apparatus made clear, a constant risk exists of political agency being appropriated by hegemony and ideology. Similar to YIHR, community projects show us how citizens are able to learn how to resist that risk. Within the space for civic action articulated by the state apparatus; within the realm of hegemony and ideology, community projects reflect how citizens can engage the state apparatus away from survival mechanisms and ethno-nationalist affiliation. As such, agency is asserted in a non-ethnic, non-clientelist, bureaucratic way. Not to say that no political appropriation takes place whatsoever. Yet, it all depends on what kind of appropriation. For example, Aldijana told me that the idea of *Dobre Kote* became so popular that a parliamentary member had expressed her support for the project, and had even tried to allocate more subsidiary funds to some of the municipalities specifically intended for their work. As necessary as these funds might be, it does imply the danger of the project becoming yet another *beneficiary* of clientelist allocation.

Conclusion

In line with anthropological research (Maček 2009; Hromadžić 2015; Jansen 2015), this thesis has focused on citizen-state relationships in Bosnia-Herzegovina, a post-conflict context with a legacy of external state-building and a flawed democratization process. With the help of Althusser (1971) and Gramsci (1992) my analysis dealt with questions of statecraft, identification, and civic action. By investigating the discrepancy between legal ethnic categories and lived experiences of cross-ethnic solidarity and shared socio-economic predicaments, the thesis aimed at showing the decline of ideological consent for Dayton ethno-politics. As the first chapter explained, ethno-nationalism was a top-down imposed ideology that appropriated politics in order to discourage alternative political projects than that of the nationalist elites. Ethnic cleansing aimed at the creation of homogeneous political communities in which nationalist parties could assert their economic and political power. The internationally negotiated DPA imposed a constitution on BiH that entrenched ethno-nationalist division as the main organizing principle for everyday life. The subsequent democratic deficit, fragile political institutions and the lack of local ownership alienated citizens from the state apparatus and the decision-making process.

The second chapter focused on this alienation from an anthropological approach and highlighted the fact that people, in the face of top-down imposed ideology, can still assume agency. With the help of Althusser, we have come to understand that the war interpellated the Bosnian population as ethnicized and victimized collective bodies with an *uncultivated* political subjectivity. Put differently, interpellation produces a political subjectivity characterized by alienation from the body-politic and a reduced sense of civic responsibility. This interpellation happens not only by ideology but also by discrepancies between lived experiences of ethnic segregation and cross-ethnic solidarity; by the lack of a cohesive state-body; by an elusive state-effect, and a feeling of spatio-temporal entrapment. Participation in the body-politic is focused on getting access to channels of state allocation and provision, which are controlled by ethno-nationalist patron-client networks. People are forced to participate in the reproduction of ethno-nationalist ideology and hegemony out of mere necessity. In other words, ethno-politics aim at a *low-level ethnicized clientelist engagement* of BiH citizens with the state apparatus; and at delegitimizing socio-economic concerns that are explicitly cross-ethnic in character.

Notwithstanding, people are primarily preoccupied with issues of functionality and existential movement and show the desire to *actively engage* the state along non-ethnic lines. In that respect, interpellation fails to generate ideological consent.

By focusing on moments of resistance and civic action, the third chapter analyzed how the contradictory nature of citizen-state relationships in BiH reveal specific dilemmas of assuming and asserting political agency in the face of ideological interpellation and hegemonic appropriation. The JMBG protests reflected a clear wish of citizens to be recognized as individual non-ethnic political subjects. Once acquired, the February Revolts tried to assert that recognition outside the state apparatus. The plenums, however, changed the terms of engagement without being able to pressure the state apparatus to accept these terms. Citizens had reoriented their political subjectivity away from *low-level ethnicized clientelist engagement*, but were forced to return to the hegemonic project. Within hegemony, a constant risk of appropriation exists. The Sarajevo Youth Summit showed that youth, by rejecting the terms of engagement with the state apparatus, could assert their agency and withstand appropriation. The educational activities of YIHR, then, teach youth how to set the terms of engagement and to engage the state apparatus on a very local level. Similarly, community projects teach citizens to organize themselves as a political collective, which becomes more resilient in engaging the state. As such, civic engagement allows citizens to renegotiate their alienated relationship with the state, cultivating a political subjectivity aimed at *active non-ethnic engagement* with the apparatus. Despite their limitations, these forms of engagement could further cultivate political agency, cross-ethnic civic responsibility and solidarity. The state, then, is not a fixed, insurmountable ethno-nationalist entity that citizens are forced to reproduce. The state becomes a site of struggle in which citizens have the possibility to influence the political agenda, albeit to a limited extent.

What does this imply? If anything, BiH citizens are learning how to exert non-ethnic citizenship as a way to mobilize political agency away from ethno-nationalism. Not to say their ethno-nationalist identities are subverted, yet civic responsibility and engagement teaches citizens they can engage the state apparatus as individual non-ethnic political subjects and not as ethnicized collective bodies. However, based on a single source it is difficult to say anything about the sustainability and effectiveness of this transformation. Except for the February Revolts, participation remained limited to a specific part of the population. Without extensive fieldwork it is impossible to say whether these new patterns of interaction could support overarching, non-

ethnic citizenship. Only by focusing on the long-term transformation of specific engagements with the state apparatus, one could investigate the potential of these new interactions. They do problematize ethno-politics, but whether they could provide a basis for socio-political reorganization is absolutely unclear at this moment. In fact, as long as the political and economic structures in BiH are sustained by the international community, it is very unlikely ethno-nationalist elites will adopt progressive politics. Consequently, despite all the hard work, Aldijana would still say that youth in general, even if they understand the importance of asserting political agency in non-ethnic ways and actively engaging the state on bureaucratic terms, quickly get demotivated due to lack of a wider counter-hegemonic movement. Nonetheless, I want to emphasize that the burden primarily lies with the international and regional context, and not so much with the individual people that are forced to reproduce the structures of subordination.

In that respect, any assessment of Balkan youth's political agency in terms of success or failure is beside the point. In line with Saba Mahmood (2001), I want to stress that it is little productive to inform analyses of local projects with normative liberal assumptions about democracy, freedom and agency. If anything, the Dayton constitution proved how gravely the foreign implementation of an external state model can fail. According to the criteria and ideology by which we assess historical and cultural specificities, we more often than not dismiss certain ideas that are perhaps valid political factors to take into account. At this point, it is worth emphasizing that different anthropological accounts have studied the apathy of Balkan youth as a site of agency, calculated choice, and political and moral preservation (see Fox 2004; Greenberg 2010, 2014; Kurtović n.d.). Non-participation, here, is explained as a complicated process in which youth choose to withdraw from the state in an active stance of defiance against the unsatisfactory political conditions that the state apparatus presents them. As such, renouncing agency becomes a political act in itself.

This thesis was not able to provide such a complex image and focused more on active participation as a form of agency. Not to say that active agency is better or worse than passive agency. Instead, the thesis focused on events and projects which allowed citizens to *reorientate* their agency *away* from low-level engaged political subjectivity. Along these lines, the thesis proposes some further research points. By keeping the focus on 'the anthropology of the state', one could investigate the effect of community projects on citizen-state relationships in BiH. Can the feeling of abandonment and spatio-temporal entrapment be addressed by these community

projects? How do participants experience the state apparatus in their effort to get something done for their community? What are the peculiarities of youth experiences; do they differ from old generations' view on these new forms of civic action in BiH? What patterns of interaction do these forms of civic action stimulate? Do people resort to their patronage network, or do they engage with the state in a purely bureaucratic way? How do ethno-politics relate to these forms of civic action? To which extent does civic engagement and investment in one's direct environment renegotiate ethno-nationalist identities? Does it cultivate cross-ethnic solidarity? And, could the projects be sustainable without a broader framework of progressive politics?

These questions would benefit from primary data generated by extensive fieldwork in Sarajevo. At this moment, it is worth pointing out that my enrollment at the Centre for Southeast European Studies in Graz would provide me the opportunity to spend the academic year of 2018-2019 at the University of Sarajevo as an exchange student. As not all contradictions of citizen-state relationships and dilemmas of asserting political agency have been dealt with here, extra tutoring in anthropological methodology and socio-scientific analysis would help me in tackling these and any other unresolved questions that this thesis might have left open.

Bibliography

- Althusser, L. (1971). 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes Towards an Investigation)', in *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*, trans. B. Brewster. New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 127-186.
- Anter, A. (2014). *Max Weber's Theory of the Modern State. Origins, Structure and Significance*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Appadurai, A. (1998). Dead Certainty: Ethnic Violence in the Era of Globalization. *Public Culture*, 10(2), 225-247.
- Arsenijević, D. (2014). *Unbriable Bosnia: The Fight for the Commons*. Baden-Baden: Nomos.
- Bakić-Hayden, M. (1995). Nesting Orientalism: the Case of Former Yugoslavia. *Slavic Review*, 54(4), 917-931.
- Balić, E.G. (2009). When Croatia Needed Serbs: Nationalism and Genocide in Sarajevo, 1941-1942. *Slavic Review*, 68(1), 116-138.
- Belloni, R. (2001). Civil Society and Peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Journal of Peace Research*, 38(2), 163-180.
- Bieber, F. & Sokolović, D. (eds.)(2001). *Reconstructing Multiethnic Societies: The Case of Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company.
- Bilsborrow, R.E. (ed.) (1998). *Migration, Urbanization, and Development: New Directions and Issues*. Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Bogaarts, M. (2006). Democracy and Power-Sharing in Multi-National State: Thematic Introduction. *Journal of Multicultural Societies*, 8(2), 119-126.
- Bojičić-Dželilović, V. (2013). Informality, Inequality and Social Reintegration in Post-War Transition. *Studies in Social Justice* 7(2): 211-218.
- Bošković, A. (2013). Yugonostalgia and Yugoslav Cultural Memory: Lexicon of Yu Mythology. *Slavic Review*, 72(1), 54-78.
- Bougarel, X., Helms, E. & Duijzings, G. (2007). *The New Bosnian Mosaic. Identities, Memories, and Moral Claims in a Post-War Society*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Bourdieu, P. (1999). 'Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field (trans. L. Wacquant and S. Farage)', in G. Steinmetz (ed.), *State/Culture: State Formation after the Cultural Turn*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 53-75

- Burg, S. L. & Shoup, P. S. (1999). *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ethnic Conflict and International Intervention*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.
- Buttigieg, J. (1995). Gramsci on Civil Society. *Boundary 2*, 22(3), 1-32.
- Campbell, D. (1998). *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity, and Justice in Bosnia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Carothers, T. (1996). *Assessing Democracy Assistance: The Case of Romania*. Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment.
- Chandler, D. (1998). Democratization in Bosnia: The limits of civil society building strategies. *Democratization*, 5(4), 78-102.
- _____. (1999). *Bosnia: Faking Democracy After Dayton*. London: Pluto Press.
- _____. (2006a). *Empire in Denial. The Politics of State-building*. London: Pluto Press.
- _____. (2006b). *Peace Without Politics? Ten Years of State-Building in Bosnia*. New York: Routledge.
- Chin, C. & Mittelman, J.H. (2000). 'Conceptualizing Resistance to Globalization', in: Gills, B. K. (2000). *Globalization and the Politics of Resistance*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 29-45.
- Das, V. (1990). *Mirrors of Violence: Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- _____. (1995). *Critical Events: An Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Detrez, R. (1996). *De sloop van Joegoslavië: relaas van een boedelscheiding*. Antwerpen: Hadewijch.
- Dibua, J.I. (2011). Ethnic Citizenship, Federal Character and Inter-Group Relations in Postcolonial Nigeria. *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 20, 1-25.
- Dimitrovova, B. (2002). Bosniak or Muslim? Dilemma of one Nation with two Names. *Southeast European Politics*, 2(2), 94-108.
- Donais, T. (2002). The Politics of Privatization in Post-Dayton Bosnia. *Southeast European Politics*, 3(1), 3-19.
- Drapac, V. (2010). *Constructing Yugoslavia: A Transnational History*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Duffield, M. (2001). *Global Governance and the New Wars: The Merging of Development and Security*. London: Zed Books.

- Fagan, A. (2005). Civil society in Bosnia ten years after Dayton. *International Peacekeeping*, 12(3), 406-419.
- Fischer, M. (ed.) (2007). *Peacebuilding and Civil Society in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ten Years after Dayton*. Berlin: LIT Verlag.
- Foucault, M. (1975). 'Governmentality', in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller (eds.), *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, pp. 73-86.
- Fox, J.E. (2004). Missing the Mark: Nationalist Politics and Student Apathy. *East European Politics and Societies*, 18(3), 363-391.
- Frederiksen, M.D. (2014). The Would-Be State: Reforms, NGOs, and Absent Presents in Postrevolutionary Georgia. *Slavic Review*, 73(2), 307-321.
- Gagnon, V.P. (2004). *The Myth of Ethnic War: Serbia and Croatia in the 1990s*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Gramsci, A. (1992). *The Prison Notebooks*, Vol I. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Greenberg, J. (2010). "There's Nothing Anyone Can Do About It": Participation, Apathy and "Successful" Democratic Transition in Postsocialist Serbia. *Slavic Review*, 69(1), 41-64.
- _____. (2014). *After the Revolution: Youth, Democracy and the Politics of Disappointment in Serbia*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
- Greenberg, R.D. (2004). *Language and Identity in the Balkans*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Harvey, D. (2004). The "New Imperialism": Accumulation by Dispossession. *Actual Marx*, 1(35), 71-90.
- Hayden, R.M. (1996). Imagined Communities and Real Victims: Self-Determination and Ethnic Cleansing in Yugoslavia. *American Ethnologist* 23(4), 783-801.
- Hayden, R.M., et al. (2007). Moral Vision and Impaired Insight: The Imagining of Other Peoples' Communities in Bosnia. *Current Anthropology* 48(1), 105-131.
- Helms, E. (2013). *Innocence and Victimhood. Gender, Nation, and Women's Activism in Postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Herzfeld, M. (1997). *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State*. New York: Routledge.
- Hromadžić, A. (2015). *Citizens of an Empty Nation: Youth and State-Making in Postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Islam, K.S. (2009). Challenges of Urban Planning at the Face of Counter-Urbanization. *Theoretical and Empirical Researches in Urban Management*, 4(2), 152-165.

- Jansen, S. (2015). *Yearnings in the Meantime: 'Normal Lives' and the State in a Sarajevo Apartment Complex*. New York, NY: Berghahn Books.
- Jildirim, U. & Navaro-Yashin, Y. (2013). An Impromptu Uprising: Ethnographic Reflections on the Gezi Park Protests in Turkey. *Cultural Anthropology*, 3. Retrieved from <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/391-an-impromptu-uprising-ethnographic-reflections-on-the-gezi-park-protests-in-turkey>
- Kalyvas, S. N. (2006). *The Logic of Violence in Civil Wars*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Koczberski, G., Curry, G.N. & Connell, J. (2001). Full Circle or Spiralling Out of Control? State Violence and the Control of Urbanisation in Papua New Guinea. *Urban Studies*, 38(11), 2017-2036.
- Kundu, A. & Sarangi, N. (2005). Issue of Urban Exclusion. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 40(22), 3642-3646.
- Kurtović, L. (n.d.). Limits of In/Action: Everyday Politics of Dis/Engagement in Postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina (Unpublished paper). University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania.
- Lederach, John P. (1997). *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Little, A. & Silber, L. (1995). *The Death of Yugoslavia*. London: Penguin Publisher.
- Maatsch, A. (2011). *Ethnic Citizen Regimes. Europeanization, Post-War Migration and Redressing Past Wrongs*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Maček, I. (2009). *Sarajevo Under Siege. Anthropology in Wartime*. University Park: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Mahmood, S. (2001). Feminist Theory, Embodiment, and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival. *Cultural Anthropology*, 16(2), 202-236.
- Markowitz, F. (2010). *Sarajevo: A Bosnian Kaleidoscope*. Urbana: Illinois University Press.
- Mitchell, T. (1999). 'Society, Economy, and the State Effect', in G. Steinmetz (ed.), *State/Culture: State Formation after the Cultural Turn*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 76-97.
- Mujkić, A. (2007). *Mi Građani Etnopolisa*. Sarajevo: Šahinpašić.
- Musi, M. (2015). *(Re)constructions: Armed conflicts, cultural heritage, (inter)national policies and local practices of memorialization in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Ph.D). University of Ghent.

- Navaro-Yashin, Y. (2002). *Faces of the State. Secularism and Public Life in Turkey*. Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Nordstrom, C. (1997). *A Different Kind of War Story*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- _____. (2004). *Shadows of War: Violence, Power and International Profiteering in the Twenty-First Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- O'Flynn, I. & Russell, D. (2005). *Power Sharing: New Challenges for Divided Societies*. London: Pluto Press.
- Ohmae, K. (1995). *The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies*. New York: Free Press Paperbacks.
- Okerić, A. (2015, October 19). *Samit Mladih u Sarajevu*. Retrieved from <http://yih.ba/oktobarski-samit-mladih-u-sarajevu/>.
- Oushakine, S.A. (2009). *The Patriotism of Despair. Nation, War, and Loss in Russia*. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press.
- Owen, B. (2013). *Bosnia-Herzegovina: The Vance/Owen Peace Plan*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- Pešić, D. & Janić, D. (1992). Nationalism and Socialism: The Case of Yugoslavia. *History of European Ideas*, 15(1-3), 201-210.
- Pickering, P. (2007). *Peacebuilding in the Balkans. The View from the Ground Floor*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Pond, E. (2006). *Endgame in the Balkans: Regime Change, European Style*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press.
- Qvortrup, M. (2013). *Direct Democracy: A comparative study of the theory and practice of government by the people*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Richmond, O.P. (2009). Becoming Liberal, Unbecoming Liberalism: Liberal-Local Hybridity via the Everyday as a Response to the Paradoxes of Peacebuilding. *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 3(3), 324-344.
- _____. (2012). A Pedagogy of Peacebuilding: Infrapolitics, Resistance and Liberation. *International Political Sociology*, 6(2), 115-131.
- Richmond, O. P. & Mac Ginty, R. (2013). The Local Turn in Peacebuilding: A Critical Agenda for Peace. *Third World Quarterly*, 34(5), 763-783.

- Said, E. (2003). *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Random House.
- Sanina, A. (2012). Competing For a Citizen: “Visible” and “Invisible” Forms of State Identity in Russia. *Journal for Eurasian Studies*, 3(2), 126-146.
- Sarajlić, E. (2010). ‘The Bosnian Triangle: Ethnicity, Politics and Citizenship’, CITSEE Working Paper. Retrieved from http://www.citsee.ed.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/108868/190thebosniantriangleethnicitypoliticsandcitizenship.pdf. Accessed February 14th, 2017.
- _____. (2012). Conceptualizing citizenship regime(s) in post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Journal of Citizenship Studies*, 16(3-4), 367-381.
- Sarajlić, E. & Marko, D. (eds.) (2011). *State or Nation? The Challenges of Political Transition in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Sarajevo: University of Sarajevo.
- Scott, J.C. (1990). *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- _____. (1998). *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- Sharma, A. & Gupta, A. (eds.) (2006). *The Anthropology of the State. A Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Tilly, Ch. (2005). 'Social Movements as Politics', in *Social Movements. 1768-2004*. Boulder/Londen: Paradigm Publishers, pp. 1-15.
- Tilly, Ch. & Tarrow, S. (2015). 'How to analyze contention', in *Contentious politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 25-45
- Todorova, M. (1996). *Imagining the Balkans*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Van Gorp, C. (2012). *Brotherhood and Unity? The Relationship Between Nationalism and Socialism in Socialist Yugoslavia*. Retrieved from <http://theses.uibn.ru.nl/bitstream/handle/123456789/2881/2012%20Gorp.pdf?sequence=1>.
- Van Winkle, D. (2005). *The Rise of Ethnic Nationalism in the Former Socialist Federation of Yugoslavia: An Examination of the Use of History*. Retrieved from <http://www.wou.edu/history/files/2015/08/Daniel-Van-Winkle.pdf>.
- Wiktorowicz, Q. (2004). ‘Introduction: Islamic Activism and Social Movement Theory’, in *Islamic Activism A Social Movement Theory Approach*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 1-37.

Woo-Cumings, M. (ed.) (1999). *The Developmental State*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Žohar, B. (2012). Misrepresentation of the Bosnian War by Western Media. *Journal of Comparative Research in Anthropology and Sociology*, 3(2), 97-110.

APPENDIX



Figure 1 and 2: Street actions in Sarajevo.





Figure 3: Street action in Stolac on Human Right's Day.



Figure 4: Child playing in Grbavica park.



Figure 5: General oversight of the first *Dobre Kote* project.

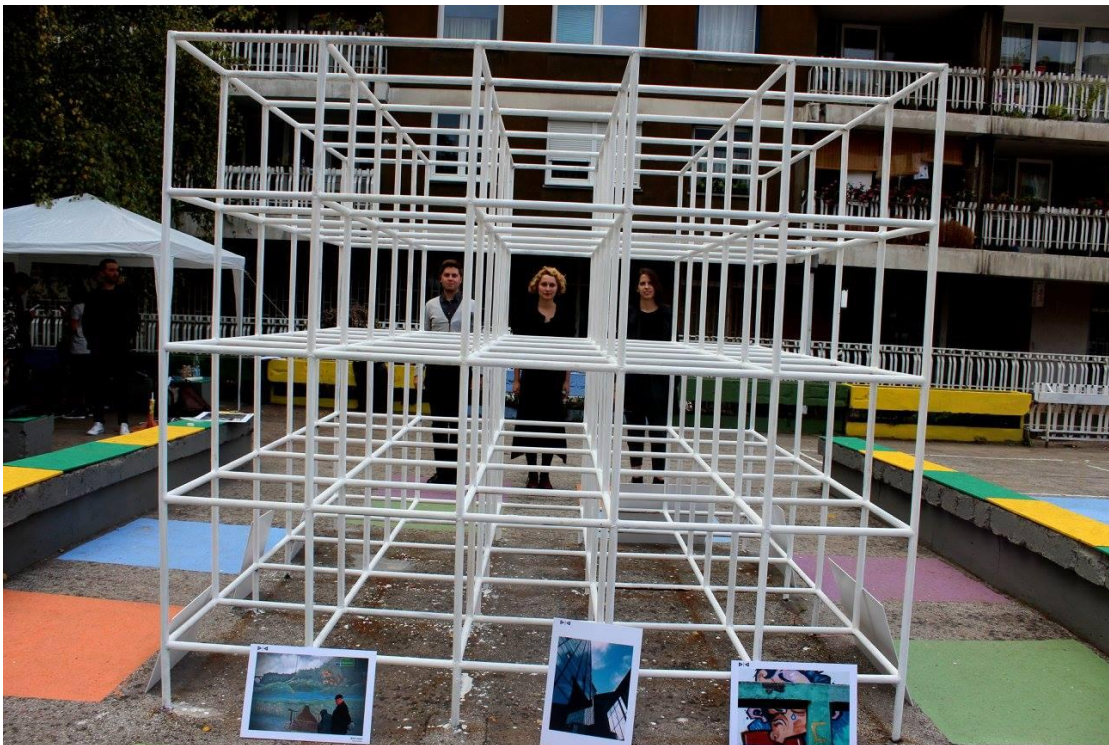


Figure 6: Irfan Salihagic, Smi Smi and Farah Zubovic posing at their contribution to the *Dobre Kote* project.

Photos by Aldijana Okerić, 2015